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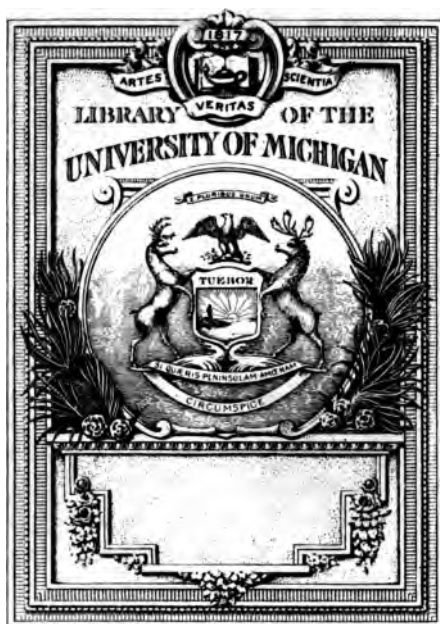
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George Augustus Sala





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LONDON UP TO DATE

LONDON UP TO DATE

BY

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA

SECOND THOUSAND

LONDON

ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK

1894

20

TO
HENRY B. WHEATLEY, F.S.A.
ONE OF THE MOST DISTINGUISHED LIVING CONTRIBUTORS
TO LONDON LORE
THIS BOOK IS CORDIALLY DEDICATED

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PREFACE

OF the making of books about London since the days of Stow there has been literally no end. The quaint old Elizabethan Chronicle was re-edited, expanded and amended in the early Georgian era by Strype; but prior to the publication of the work of that esteemed cleric the seventeenth century had abounded in books bearing directly or indirectly on the British metropolis, and on the manners and customs of its citizens. The diaries of Pepys and Evelyn are to a great extent guide-books to London. In the reign of Charles II. a Grand Duke of Tuscany travelled through England and recorded, or caused to be recorded, his impressions of London life. The inimitable *Memoirs* of the Chevalier de Grammont supplement the pictures of court life bequeathed to us by the two illustrious diarists just mentioned. The carefully observant Frenchman, Misson, was within our gates in the reign of William III.; and about the same time there was published in Holland a volume entitled *Les Délices de la Grande Bretagne*, of which a considerable portion is devoted to engravings and descriptions of the public buildings of London. The great city was repeatedly a theme for the pens of

Swift, of Defoe, and of Gay. It is the text of Johnson's noble, but all too brief, satire. Graphic pictures of London life abound in the novels of Fielding and Smollett, and in Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*. Hughson, Malcolm, and Pennant wrote voluminous histories of the capital of the British Empire; and in Ackermann's *Microcosm of London*, illustrated by Rowlandson and the eldest Pagin, we have a marvelously accurate conspectus of London as it existed in the first decade of the present century. Pierce Egan's *Life in London*, and its imitator *Doings in London*, are coarse but tolerably faithful aspects of many phases of London life; while much gracefuller and more humorous are the metropolitan essays of Charles Lamb and Leigh Hunt. Quite a new and a vivid tableau of London was given in the *Sketches by Boz*, in the *Pickwick Papers*, in *Oliver Twist*, in *Nicholas Nickleby*, and in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, by Charles Dickens; and while the great novelist was gathering his first laurels, Mr. Fisher Murray was writing his *World of London*, and Charles Knight his *Cyclopædia of London*. As regards the present generation, books about London have been as numerous as leaves in Vallombrosa, or as the amours of Don Giovanni as summarised by Leporello. Most conspicuous among the chroniclers of Victorian London was my late and dear friend Peter Cunningham, F.S.A., whose *Handbook of London* has been quite recently re-edited and almost rewritten by Mr. Henry B. Wheatley, F.S.A., to whom I have taken the liberty of dedicating this little work. Another most dis-

tinguished historian of London in the past is Mr. Loftie. Gustave Doré's matchless pencil was employed to illustrate a book on London, the text of which was written by the late Blanchard Jerrold; nor must I forget to mention with eulogy the metropolitan prose sketches of another foreign observer of our manners, Monsieur Alphonse Esquiros. Henry Mayhew's *London Labour and the London Poor* has long since become a classic. Mr. Frederick Locker-Lampson and Mr. Clement Scott have sung lyrically on London; nor has the eloquent pen of Mr. G. R. Sims been silent with regard to the city which virulent old Cobbett contemptuously termed "the Great Wen." The late Mr. Runciman and the late Mr. Thomas Archer laboured assiduously at the task of portraying East-End London; Mr. James Greenwood has done yeoman's service in the same cause; and among the latest and the ablest commentators on things metropolitan it would be unjust not to mention Mr. Walter Besant.

Under these circumstances it would not by any means surprise me to find the New Reader,—for there is a New Reader, just as there is a New Journalist and a New Woman—asking with some acerbity what the deuce I have to do in this galley: a craft on board which, time out of mind, the labouring oars have been tugged at by rowers fifty times abler and more observant than I? Assuming this question to have been put, a very brief reply shall be given to it. Thirty-seven years have passed away since I published a book called *Twice Round the Clock: or The Hours of*

the Day and Night in London; and I have been writing, at intervals, about the great metropolis ever since. Twenty years ago Mr. John Forster in his *Life of Charles Dickens* was good enough to observe that I was "an authority on London Streets"; and that generous tribute to my humble capacity as a traveller in Cockneyland has in no slight measure conduced to my writing *London up to Date*. It does not in the slightest degree profess to be a continuation of *Twice Round the Clock*. I am rather too elderly to be able to sit up all night; and I know little at present of what goes on in London in the small hours. Thus the hours in this work are not consecutively enumerated. They are only so many detached essays describing scenes and characters which did not find a place in *Twice Round the Clock*. For example, in 1857 I had never been to Court; I was not a member of any West-End Club; I did not live in a flat; these were practically our "first nights" at the London theatres; I had never served on a jury; I had never dined at the hospitable board of a city company; there was no Victoria Embankment; there were no Pullman cars on board which you could take breakfast or luncheon; and the "fancy fairs" and "public breakfasts" differed very widely from the charitable bazaars and garden parties of the present year of grace. The New Reader will also please to remember that in 1857 the population of the metropolis was in round numbers, two millions eight hundred thousand, and that in 1894 it is rapidly approaching five millions. Since I wrote *Twice*

Round the Clock, square miles of slums have been swept away by the defunct Metropolitan Board of Works, and by the extant London County Council. Her Majesty's Theatre in the Haymarket has, to the regret of all genuine opera-goers, been demolished : still, there is some compensation for that melancholy event in the circumstance that at least a score of new theatres have been built in London during the last thirty years. The shabby, stuffy, costly inns which formerly, under the name of hotels, disgraced the metropolis, and made us the scoff of foreigners, have been superseded by palatial caravansaries. A new Palace of Justice has been built ; a new National Portrait Gallery has arisen ; and South Kensington has been endowed with a stately Natural History Museum. Shaftesbury Avenue, Charing Cross Road and Queen Victoria Street have been added to the spacious thoroughfares of London ; and I rejoice to know that the grimy, ramshackle, obstructive, old Temple Bar with its Golgotha memories has been carted away into the country. The city in which I was born and of which, as a true Cockney, I am proud, is still in need of many things. We want a new abode for the Lord Mayor of London, handsomer and statelier than the cumbrous and tasteless Mansion House ; we want a dignified habitation on the Embankment for the London County Council ; and on that same Embankment there should not only be more statues but plenty of cafés, kiosks, and long rows of bookstalls such as exist in Paris on the quays of the left bank of the Seine. We want a National Theatre, endowed by the State ;

and especially do we want National Folksgardens :—comely, roomy, prettily decorated, where the working classes and their wives and children can sit, not only in the evening, but in the afternoon when work is over, and refresh themselves, if they like, with light beer, and listen to first-rate instrumental music. By the time these wants are satisfied I shall probably be under the turf; but that they will be eventually satisfied I unhesitatingly believe.

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA.

2 EASTERN TERRACE, BRIGHTON,

15th Sept. 1894.

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I

TWO P.M. : A LEVÉE AT ST. JAMES'S PALACE

MORE than twoscore years ago I used to write a great deal about life and manners in that most wonderful of all cities—London. The first article that I contributed to Dickens's *Household Words* was called "The Key of the Street," and was a description of the night-wanderings of a Cockney who had been accidentally locked out of his own house, and who, during the small hours, much to his own discomfort, had to make the acquaintance of Oxford Street—"Stony-hearted step-mother," as De Quincey called that populous thoroughfare,—and many other streets, courts, lanes, and alleys besides. In the same periodical I discoursed on the humours of "Jack Alive," in Ratcliff Highway ; on men and women and things in general "Down Whitechapel way" ; on divers phases of public-house life ; on the hospitality shown to the miserables who were "Houseless and Hungry," in Refuges for the Destitute ; on pawnbrokers' shops ; on furnished lodgings ; on

London eating-houses and coffee-shops; and on the squalor and the vice of "Gibbet Street"—by which I meant an infamous place "off" Drury Lane.

All these things, I am afraid, so far as my descriptions of them are concerned, have long since passed into the domain of ancient history. Younger and more graphic writers than I—and among them let me hasten to recognise Mr. G. R. Sims—have travelled over the ground which I once perambulated: but with firmer footsteps and more perceptive eyes. Mr. Thackeray once said that he had forgotten his way to Bohemia; but that he still considered the city of Prague to be the most picturesque one on the face of the globe. *Longo intervallo*, I may point out that I know little about what is called "low life" in London at the present day; chiefly because, during the last thirty-four years, I have had, when I was not absent in foreign climes, to write a leading article in a great daily newspaper on six days in every mortal week; and I have thus had literally no time to indulge in the instructive and now fashionable pursuit of "slumming"; and also because I am no longer active or agile—necessary qualifications, since the writer who is ambitious to be an efficient "slummer" must look as carefully to his training and his general physical condition as though he were a pugilist or a professional pedestrian. Yet has it seemed to me that there is a good deal of London left to be described, which has nothing to do with the East End, with the wretchedness of common "doss"-houses, the iniquities of slop-shop sweaters, or the woes of

dockers and match-box makers ; so I intend to write a series of descriptive essays on "London Up to Date"—on what is to be heard and seen and commented upon in the British metropolis in the year of grace 1894.

For the nonce, my theme shall be a West End one, and altogether up-to-date in the London Occidental sense. What do you think of Two P.M., and a Levée at St. James's Palace? They say at Rome that when the pilgrim thither has once drunk of the waters of the Fountain of Trevi, he is sure to return to the Eternal City. *Qui a bu, boira* ; and I fancy that when you have once made your bow to Royalty, you will continue to do so, once a year, until you are bedridden, or have shut yourself up in entire seclusion with nothing but a briar-wood pipe, an Encyclopædia Britannica, and the weekly *Referee* to comfort you in your old age. I have known men give up all their clubs ; and very miserable they have generally been, in consequence. I have known old playgoers altogether abjure the theatre ; and very dull dogs they have generally turned out to be. So, not wishing to be dull or miserable, or to put on the airs of misanthropy or of a hatred of shows and pageants, which I honestly consider to be interesting and picturesque as well as useful things—for the world without shows and pageants would be wearisome and uncouth and boorish,—I array myself in courtly garb once a year, on one of the days officially fixed for a levée at St. James's ; get through the not very toilsome ceremony as quickly as I may ; and then resume with all possible swiftness the garments of private life,

and resume my labours as a paper-stainer in monochrome. Did not the Right Hon. John Morley, after he had been sworn a Privy Councillor, quickly hail a hansom and go home to finish a leader?

Now, I will assume, my excellent male reader, that circumstances over which you *have* control have led you to gratify the very innocent wish to be presented at Court. You have communicated your aspirations to some exalted personage of your acquaintance having the privilege of the *entrée*. Your desire has been gracefully acceded to. The exalted personage has vouchsafed to be your sponsor; and you are to attend at the next levée (which is to be held at two in the afternoon); only your temporary godfather warns you that unless you wish to incur the risk of waiting a very long time on a possibly raw spring morning, in some slightly chilly apartments, you had best be at the side entrance of St. James's Palace as soon after one o'clock as you possibly can. This means practically that you have scarcely swallowed your breakfast and glanced through the *Times* leaders, "London Day by Day" in the *Daily Telegraph*, the fashionable intelligence of the *Morning Post*—you feel, oh! so fashionable this momentous morning—before you begin to think that it is nearly time to dress. Your servant brings you the shallow, oblong, japanned tin box, which has just come home from the obliging firm of tailors and accoutrement makers who have engaged to furnish your entire courtly equipment; and with trembling hands you turn the key in the patent lock, and take

out, one by one, the articles constituting what may irreverently be termed your "togger."

Please to understand that the mysterious Fates who hold sway in the Lord Chamberlain's department have decreed that there shall be four distinct kinds of levée dress in which it is permissible for you, being a *pékin*, to present yourself before your Sovereign's representative. You may, if you please, array yourself in the old, old-fashioned Court dress, which includes, I think, a plum-coloured coat of the cut of the year 1789, a brocaded waistcoat, black silk smalls, pale pink silk stockings, shoes with buckles, and a small three-cornered hat. Stay! At the nape of the neck the coat should be adorned with a black silk bow—the dim survival of the ancient bag-wig. This costume, when I was young, was wont to be patronised by provincial mayors, and even by dignitaries of the Corporation of London, when they came to Court. But what I may term the "bag-wig" dress has fallen, practically, into desuetude.

The second alternative costume is a very dignified and tasteful one—black velvet coat, waistcoat, and continuations, black silk stockings, shoes—with buckles if you like—point or Brussels lace cravat, lace ruffles, cut steel buttons for the coat, and a sword with a black scabbard and cut steel hilt; a cocked hat of the *chapeau bras* order "completing your attire," as Mr. G. P. R. James, the novelist, used to say. One problem, nevertheless, remains to be solved before you venture upon donning this stately habit, which always reminds me equally of

General Washington, as President of the United States, and of a modern Hamlet, Prince of Denmark.

The problem is a delicate and difficult one. It is a question of Legs. If Nature has not been so bounteous as to endow you, or art incapable of providing you, with lower extremities resembling in symmetry the legs of a dining-room table, you had much better abandon the idea of the black velvet Court dress altogether. It is a great thing to be born with "dinner-table legs." Youths of the humbler classes, possessing shapely calves, may ultimately graduate as powdered footmen in the families of the nobility and gentry. An actor with a good leg may always hope to play Romeo—with shrunken shanks he would inevitably fail in that arduous part; while a curate with symmetrical supports may secretly, and not without reason, nourish the persuasion that, some day or another, he will be raised to the Episcopal Bench. Old King Ernest of Hanover used to say that the decline of the Church of England began with bishops' footmen ceasing to wear purple liveries. What would become of the Establishment, I wonder, if bishops themselves appeared in trousers? I shudder to think! I have heard, indeed, of one prelate who has unblushingly made a public appearance in pantaloons! I can scarcely believe the statement; but if it indeed be true, I sincerely hope that the Right Reverend innovator was only a Colonial.

Now there is yet a third levée dress, a very gay and glittering one, and quite military in its fashion, although its wearer may have no more to do with war than a

parish beadle has. This is a scarlet tunic with silver embroidery, a snowy-plumed cocked hat, bright crimson sash, brass-hilted and scabbarded sabre. Such raiment is worn by members of the Commission or Court of Lieutenancy of the City of London. Formerly, in lieu of the tunic, a swallow-tail scarlet coat with large silver epaulettes used to be donned. Gentlemen who were appointed to the Commission of Lieutenancy when this particular garb prevailed, are still suffered to wear it at St. James's. The tunic without epaulettes is, however, predominant at present; nor should it be confounded with the almost identical panoply worn by the Deputy Lieutenants of counties when they attend a levée. These provincial grandees are somewhat haughty parties, and look down on the civic "swells" with such a sublimity of contempt as the Lord High Chancellor, in his gold robe, with his purse-bearer before him and his train-bearer behind him, might look upon a process-server of the Westminster County Court.¹

I will assume that it is the fourth and last kind of levée uniform that you have selected, and the various articles of which have been carefully taken out of the japanned tin case, divested of the silver paper with which the decorative details have been covered, and laid one by one on the bed for your inspection. A *coda di rondine* single-breasted coat of dark claret-coloured cloth, with a stand-up collar—collar and cuffs

¹ Talking of Lord Chancellors, it is curious to read that Charles the Second's Lord Shaftesbury, who had never been bred to the law nor called to the bar, always presided in the Court of Chancery *in a brown silk gown* instead of a black one.

and the flaps of the pockets gay, but not gaudy, with gold lace ; gilt buttons adorned with the Royal crown ; white waistcoat with similar gilt buttons ; a white cravat and "all-round collar" ; trousers of the same hue as the coat, and embellished with a broad band of gold lace on the outward seams ; a sword with a gilt hilt and bullion tassel ; white kid gloves, varnished boots, and a fore-and-aft cocked hat of silk beaver, with a gilt button and galloon of gold lace.

There you are, or rather there the things are ; but the question now arises, How are you to get into them ? The coat and trousers do not button in the same way as ordinary items of clothing do ; the trousers have straps ; and straps in civil attire went out, very likely, before you were born. You discover at the last moment that your boots should be Wellingtons, and not of mere ankle-altitude. If you wear half-boots, or, worse still, shoes, your sin—or rather your straps—will find you out ; and the official who stands at the door of the Throne Room, and overhauls each incomer with his eagle eye, may scowl at the wearer of untopped boots. Then you are in a desperate state of uncertainty as to how you should wear your fore-and-aft cocked hat. Should the galloon be on the right or the left side ? How are you to manage your sword-belt ? Is it lawful to wear a watch-guard ? All these doubts are best solved, if you have not an accomplished *valet de chambre* to attire you, by securing the services of some one who has been in the army and has fulfilled the functions of an officer's servant. He will dress you perfectly in ten

minutes. If you trust to self-help, the process may take you three-quarters of an hour, and you will come out wrong at last. It may be taken for granted that, although ever since you have begun to dress, you have been thinking you will be too late, you will find yourself fully caparisoned at least an hour before it is time to start.

On the precise manner in which you proceed to St. James's I need not discourse. Your locomotion must be according to your means. It was in a very shabby uniform, and in a cab, so the author of *Vanity Fair* tells us, that Colonel Rawdon Crawley, late of the Life Guards, waited on His Majesty George IV. Cabs were, to be sure, not introduced into the Metropolis until the succeeding reign; but that matters little. At all events, you must get to the palace somehow. If you have no brougham of your own, or you cannot find a friend to lend you one, there is no harm in a hansom. But I should strongly advise you not to travel palacewards in a tramcar or on the knifeboard of an omnibus. There will be no use in telling your possibly jocular travelling companions that you are a volunteer.

At all events, the Horse Guards clock, and the equally trustworthy horologe of the dingy brick gateway of the palace itself, facing St. James's Street, have scarcely proclaimed the hour of one, when you find yourself under an assuredly not magnificent colonnade east of the Colour Court, and north of the quadrangle, where the palace guard is daily trooped, and Lieutenant

Dan Godfrey, or some other bandmaster of the Household Brigade, incites his scarlet-coated minstrels to discourse the strains of martial music. The colonnade is crowded with a dazzling assemblage of gentlemen in sumptuous attire; the military predominating. Old generals and colonels revisit the scenes which have been familiar to them for perhaps half a century; while fresh, ruddy, brisk young subalterns flock for the first time to the levée, to be presented by their commanding officer. Others have to be presented on their promotion, or on their return from India.

Very curious is it to mark the contrast between the faded scarlet and tarnished lace of the veterans, and the brand-new uniforms, the glittering lace and dazzling accoutrements, of the youngsters—dashing young Hussars, peach-faced young Guardsmen, stalwart officers in Highland regiments, grand in the panoply of the garb of Old Gaul, with resplendent but somewhat more serious-looking “gunners” and engineers. Then there are a good many admirals and post-captains and naval officers of other grades, glorified in blue and gold; and at least those gallant sons of Neptune have not yet been deprived of their massive bullion epaulettes. In the courtly throng likewise will you discern doctors of divinity, Royal chaplains and rural deans in cassocks, and College Dons in full academic array, and proctors severely sumptuous in gowns with velvet sleeves. There, too, is a grandee in flowing sable robe and bands of lawn and a full-bottomed wig. He must be a judge of the Queen’s Bench Division at least, you think! No,

he is only an eminent Q.C. Another, and even a more gorgeous addition to the crowd under the colonnade may be confidently reckoned upon at an up-to-date levée at St. James's. Behold the Oriental magnificoes. Gaze with rapt eyes upon Rum Jum Jellybag from Bengal, in a caftan of kincob, or cloth of gold, with a white muslin turban as big as a life-belt, and a pearl necklace round his chocolate-coloured neck. Observe Bobbachee-Lal, from Bogglywallah, with a cylindrical erection of silk, gold lace and jewels on his head, like the Leaning Tower of Pisa decked for a *festa*.

And, again, cast your eyes on a little old man with a face like an over-ripe quince, and a white beard, who wears immense blue spectacles with gold rims, and robes of green silk, and a blue bonnet resembling in shape an extinguisher. That is Krammejee Baboo, the most learned Moonshee—I beg pardon, Munshi—in the Bombay Presidency. You do not see, under that colonnade opposite the German chapel and the garden entrance of Marlborough House, the exalted personage who has so condescendingly promised to present you. Will he turn up in good time? This you ask yourself as you glance nervously at a card inscribed with cabalistic characters which he has forwarded to you. But you seek for him in vain. He and other exalted ones, having the privilege of the *entrée*, have entered, or will enter, the palace by a special door in the Ambassadors' Court. That is also the reason why, as yet, there are not visible to you any members of the Corps Diplomatique, any noblemen or gentlemen in

Ministerial uniforms, any Chancellor, any Bishops or great officers of State. But suddenly a great oaken door under the colonnade is thrown open; there is a great rustling of robes and a clattering of sabres, and the glittering throng begins to flow into St. James's Palace.

NOTE.—I have designedly omitted to print the word "*levée*" in italics, because, in the sense of a reception by British Royalty, it is not a French, but an English word of laughably illegitimate extraction. *Levee*, in French, means a removal, a gathering, a dyke, a causeway, a trick at cards. The embankment which prevents the city of New Orleans from being flooded by the Mississippi is rightly called "*the Levée*"; but the receptions held by the French monarchs of the *ancien regime* were called *Levers*—the royal getting out of bed. It was at a *Lever* at Versailles that Louis XIV., to the confusion of his courtiers, asked Molière to breakfast.

II

TWO P.M. : A LEVÉE AT ST. JAMES'S PALACE—(*Continued*)

THE first sensation of the individual to be presented, on entering the palace, is one of blank disappointment. The corridor into which you press with a splendidly appavelled throng before, behind, and around you, presents anything but a palatial aspect. It is, to say the least, somewhat narrow, somewhat dark, and decidedly gloomy. Well; there are many historic palaces in Europe, the approaches to which are the reverse of sumptuous or stately. Into the Tuileries, of which not one stone now remains upon another, you stepped at once into magnificence; and the great white marble staircase by which the State apartments of the palace of the Kremlin at Moscow are reached is an imposing, although steep structure.

On the other hand, it is by the meanest of tile-paved steps that the Sala Regia, the Sala Ducale, and the Sistine Chapel, in the Palace of the Vatican, are entered; and the approaches to the splendid saloons of the Pitti Palace at Florence are even meaner and

steeper, and not too clean. But you emerge from these shabby stairways to find yourself in apartments of colossal proportions, full of costly furniture, from the ceilings of which hang gigantic chandeliers of Venetian crystals, the cornices and columns of the doorways radiant with gilt mouldings, and the walls hung with priceless tapestry, with historic frescoes, or with gallery pictures by the very greatest masters the world has ever seen. You leave the darksome, intricate, and not too sweetly smelling stairs, and suddenly find yourself in the presence of Michel Angelo and Raffaele, of Titian and Correggio, of Sir Peter Rubens and Sir Anthony Vandyck. That, you will be dejected to find, is not the case at St. James's Palace. Indeed, but for the presence of a couple of the Royal marshalsmen in scarlet and gold coatees and black and gold shakos of flower-pot form, and who bear gilt *bâtons* of command in their hands, there is scarcely anything Royal about the vestibule of the palace, which, all things considered, is an edifice not up to any date save that of the most tasteless and the dingiest period of the early Georgian era.

There is, however, a blazing fire, quite regal in its wealth of incandescence ; and there you warm yourself for a while, waiting for the barriers to be removed, and for the great crowd of gentlemen in gala attire to ascend the grand staircase into the State apartments. There is a baize-covered counter to your right as you enter, behind which there is a courteous official. You take from a great stack of pasteboards two large blank

cards, on which you write your name as legibly as you can ; and then you cool your heels, or warm them, as the case may be, for another quarter of an hour : speculating as to the identities of the sparkling throng around you ; wondering at the variety and comeliness of the military uniforms ; and if there be any foreign warriors present, contrasting their equipment with those of the British sons of Mars, and arriving, perhaps, at the conviction that, after all, the Queen's scarlet and the Queen's blue are the handsomest uniforms in the world.

Perchance, if you are more than middle-aged or quite elderly when you first attend a levée, just one little touch of envy may pass through your mind, like the shadow of a summer cloud on a green field, when you look on the throng of very young men, all spruce and smart in their gay regimentals, laughing and carrying themselves with the alertness and elasticity of youth, and muse upon the bright, happy, prosperous time that is before them. They come here for the first time, inexperienced young subs ; they return some day, bronzed with Indian suns, their breasts covered with stars and crosses, the emblems of the laurels they have won in far-off fields. They may have lost a leg or an arm or so ; but the empty sleeve or the artificial limb is only another leaf in the chaplet of valour.

After waiting a while a barrier is lifted or a glass door opened and you pass into another larger, and somewhat statelier vestibule, where you first become aware of the presence of some of the Royal footmen,

duly powdered and in full State livery. By this time you may have grown slightly flustered, and have but an indistinct idea whither you should proceed ; but the best course to adopt is the one recommended by the late Rev. Henry Ward Beecher to an admirer from Europe, who, being in New York, and meeting the famous preacher in society, asked how he should find his way to the Brooklyn Tabernacle. "Take the ferry, and follow the crowd," was the advice of the then amazingly popular pastor. Truly, when you have passed through the second vestibule there is no ferry to take ; still you may advantageously "follow the crowd" ; and as you follow it, you will give up one of your cards to another official ; but whether he be a Royal lackey, or a Marshalman, or a Yeoman of the Guard, you are unable afterwards for the life of you to remember.

Next, you will find yourself at the base of a really handsome staircase, ascending which in serried array you may hear, if you keep your ears open, a good deal of lively small talk as to what is going on, not only in "smart" London, at the clubs, and in West End *cotteries*, but in the "City" ; for here, disguised in the scarlet and carrying the plumed cocked hats of deputy lieutenants or members of the Court of Lieutenancy, are a large contingent of City Aldermen, Common Councillors, Town Clerks, City Solicitors, and so forth. So far as I am concerned, the first time I ascended the staircase I remembered that my dear mother used to tell me that in William IV.'s time, when the Sailor King and Queen Adelaide held a Drawing Room at St. James's—

Buckingham Palace was not then completed—a certain number of privileged London milliners and dressmakers used to be allowed to stand behind the Yeomen of the Guard, lining the stairs, and take note of the fashions of the ladies' dresses.

Nowadays, illustrated fashion books are as plentiful as peas; industrious lady journalists go round the "studios" of the Court dressmakers to take notes of the newest things in Drawing Room dress; and there are even five - o'clock Drawing Room teas, to which the ladies who have just returned from Buckingham Palace repair in all the splendour of their costly panoply to be gazed upon by admiring or perhaps secretly disparaging friends who have not yet had the honour of entering the Royal presence. And if the fortunate fair ones, who have been presented that afternoon, *do* stop on their way home at Elliott and Fry's or at Van der Weyde's to be photographed—trains, Brussels lace, bouquets, diamonds, ostrich plumes, and all—who shall blame them? I doubt whether any male creature privileged to wear levée dress would care much about being focussed, negatived, and posited in *that* apparel.

At the summit of the staircase you find yourself in a large—a very large—apartment, handsome enough from an old-fashioned point of view, and with some rather misty portraits and battle-pieces on the walls. This the guide-books will tell you is the old Presence Chamber. But your remembrance of the guide-books under the excitement of the moment gets very mixed

and muddled indeed. There should be a saloon called the Tapestry Chamber, the walls of which are hung with arras made for Charles II., but never actually suspended, until the marriage, in 1795, of the Prince of Wales. You have read that over the fireplace in this room exist some relics of the period of Henry VIII., including the carved initials, "H. A." (Henry and Anne Boleyn), united by a true lover's knot; the Fleur-de-lys of France, the Portcullis of Westminster, and the Rose of Lancaster; but afterwards, when you go to luncheon at your club, having previously divested yourself of your gala garments in one of the dressing-rooms, you ask yourself, usually without any satisfactory result, whether you have really passed through a chamber that was tapestried, or whether, in leaving the Presence, you had walked through an armoury, the walls of which were decorated with daggers, muskets, and swords, arranged in various devices, such as stars, circles, lozenges, and vandyke zigzags. In entering, you know that you were for a while stationary in one very splendidly furnished room, hung with crimson damask, the sofas, ottomans, and chairs covered with crimson velvet and trimmed with gold lace, the walls hung with crimson damask, the window curtains of the same sumptuous fabric. You have a dim remembrance of a full-length portrait of George II. in his robes, of a very large mirror, and a big chandelier. Was this the great Council Chamber? You are not at all certain about the matter. The fact is that, in the first place, you were too nervous to take

stock, from an upholsterer's point of view, of the furniture and decorations of the apartments. In the next place, you had no convenient opportunity for examining the localities, seeing that you were penned up with a constantly thickening crowd of gentlemen in uniform in a narrow aisle or gangway extending the entire length of the room, on the side of the great windows overlooking the garden of the palace, and cut off from the remaining portion of the saloon by a barrier covered with crimson cloth.

In the space left open stand at ease, quietly chatting, the members of Her Majesty's Honourable Corps of Gentlemen-at-Arms, formerly known as the Gentlemen Pensioners, the patrician section of the Queen's body-guard. These gentlemen are superbly clad in scarlet uniforms of a cavalry cut. They wear plumed helmets, and carry glistening steel partisans with heavy bullion tassels. They are, at the present day, all commissioned officers of distinction, many of their number well stricken in the vale of years. They are appointed to their honourable station by the Crown; and they have their mess-room in the palace, where Royalties sometimes dine with them. But up to the time of the accession of Her Majesty the place of a Gentleman-at-Arms was purchasable, and very odd fish were sometimes taken in the net of scarlet and gold. One of the corps was Alfred Bunn, sometime lessee and manager of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, author of the words of "Then you'll remember me," and "I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls"—the "Poet Bunn," in fine,

whom *Punch* in his early days used so unmercifully to ridicule. Bunn, whom I knew very well, and who was, on the whole, not at all a bad fellow, had a singular but very practical reason for serving as one of Her Majesty's bodyguard. Theatrical managers have their ups and their downs, occasionally more of a disastrously downward than of a pleasantly upward tendency; and the Gentlemen-at-Arms were, *ex officio*, exempt from arrest for debt.

The remembrance, however, of Poet Bunn soon fades away as you are gently moved on by imperceptible official impulsion into another apartment, which may or may not be Queen Anne's Room, most superbly upholstered, and containing a full-length portrait of George III. in his robes of the Order of the Garter. You know that there is at least one lofty pier-glass in this room; and there is a gilt clock and a *console* table by the side of a tall window. You know this, because in front of that window you will be wedged for the next twenty minutes—possibly longer. You look from the casement; and beyond the garden wall you see the Mall of St. James's Park, and the trees, perhaps leafless, perhaps just putting on their spring livery of verdure, and at their base a crowd of sightseers, anxious to obtain a peep at the Royalties in their State carriages, coming from Marlborough House.

It is luckily a day of sunshine, and, after waiting the time I have mentioned, you see over the coping of the wall the sun flashing on the helmets and cuirasses and drawn swords of the escort of Life Guards, soon followed

by the scarlet and gold lace of the Royal coachmen and footmen. Then the great garden gate is opened, you hear the cheers of the crowd, and the strains of a military band playing the National Anthem; and golden coach after golden coach drawn by stately black steeds drive rapidly into the courtyard of the palace. The Prince of Wales and his brother princes, his two sons—alas! his two sons—and the Duke of Cambridge have arrived. You wait another ten minutes or so, and then comes a fresh gentle intimation to “move on,” and the crowd of gentlemen in levée dress stream in to the Presence Chamber, the centre of which is occupied by the Ambassadors and Ministers, and noblemen having the *entrée*; while you file five or six deep along the windowed wall of the chamber. You see in the distance the throne, on a raised dais of crimson velvet adorned with gold lace, and surmounted by a canopy of the same. You don’t see anything else, since your whole system of nerves seems to be singing and dancing “Tar-ra-ra-boom-de-ay!” within you. There is a swimming in your eyes, and your knees knock a little. Bear up! Pull yourself together! Keep a stiff upper lip! It will soon be over, and Royalty won’t eat you. You blunder on, somehow, till you are brought up with mild firmness by a glorified gentleman who takes from you your second card. He hands it to an even more gorgeous personage, carrying a white wand, and who reads out your name in a, to you, embarrassingly sonorous voice.

A few steps more and you find yourself in front of a Gracious Gentleman in the uniform of a Field-Marshal.

If it be a "collar day," the Heir Apparent will wear the full insignia of his various Orders. If you have the honour of being known to the Prince he will shake hands with you and greet you with a pleasant smile. If you be not known to him, you will bow and pass on; but you will not be deprived of the pleasant smile, and the inclination of the head from H.R.H. In the heavy shadows thrown by the curtains and the canopy of the throne, you will dimly discern other Royalties: the Duke of Edinburgh in the blue and gold of an Admiral, the Duke of Cambridge in Field-Marshal's panoply, Prince George of Wales in naval attire, Prince Albert Victor, Duke of Clarence and Avondale, in the uniform of the 10th Hussars. Alack! what have I written? You *would* have seen, I should have said, for the beloved young prince, for whose untimely death a whole nation wept, and with whose bereaved parents every nation in the civilised world sympathise, will be seen no more at a levée at St. James's Palace.

Your tribulations are over. You hasten, so soon as you have left the Presence, through a lofty corridor lined by the Beef-eaters. Down the staircase you speed into the narrow corridor, whence you approach the state apartments. You put on your cocked hat, and emerge again into the open under the colonnade, close to the quadrangle facing eastwards, and the proper name of which you will remember, now, is the "Chair Court," so called from the number of sedans which, in olden days, used to set down their bedizened burdens in this precinct of St. James's Palace.

Aha! I hear my enemies ejaculate, Flunkey! Parasite! Snob! Toad-eater! Tuft-hunter! Flunkey!—while those who sit in the chair of the scornful will hurl their derisive flouts and jeers at me, and ask why I, a mere working journalist, presume to ape the mien of a courtier? There may be others who will insinuate that I have never seen a levée at all; that I have evolved this paper from my internal consciousness; or that I have vamped up my description of the function from accounts which I have read, or the narratives of the people whom I have met.

I beg respectfully to state that ten years ago I was no more ambitious of paying my respects to the Gracious Personage who represents Her Majesty on such occasions, and presentation to whom is equivalent to one to the Queen herself, than of becoming Vice-Chancellor of the University of Honolulu, or an Elder Brother of the Trinity House, or a member of the Balloon Society, or of offering myself as a candidate to the electors of the borough of Smokely-cum-Sewer. It was owing to circumstances over which I had no control that I first donned levée dress. I had, in the pursuit of my harmless and necessary vocation, to go to Moscow to witness the coronation of the Czar Alexander III. The Russian Ambassador in London politely but plainly intimated to my colleagues and myself that we could not be admitted to the Kremlin or to the Imperial Palace without we were either in military uniforms or in Court dress. As I am the most civil of civilians and had never been presented at Court, I found myself for a

short time confronted by a slight dilemma. I might perhaps have solved the difficulty by going to Madame Auguste (which her name is Harris), and entreating that eminent *costumière* to obtain a levée uniform for me on hire ; but I adopted the bolder and better course of asking my old and kind friend Lord Wolseley to present me at the next levée at St. James's. This his lordship very cordially consented to do, and I sped on my journey without fear of the contingency of being detected as an impostor.

NOTE.—The Duke of Edinburgh is now, obviously, the Duke of Coburg ; and Madame “Auguste,” the esteemed mother of Sir Augustus Harris, is dead.

A BANQUET AT FISHMONGERS' HALL

YOU were favoured some days since with a card neatly printed in blue, and embellished with an engraved coat-of-arms, surmounted by a casque, bearing a crown regal; the shield bearing quarterings of crossed keys and crossed gurnets; together with some strange spiky creatures which might be either porpoises or sea hedgehogs. The supporters of this escutcheon were a mermaid, with her looking-glass and flowing locks, on the dexter, and, to all appearances, Mars, God of War, with a fish's tail, to the sinister; while the card itself was an invitation from the Prime Warden, the Renter Warden, and the Court of Assistants of the Worshipful Company of Fishmongers, who requested the honour of your company at dinner at their Hall at the north-western foot of London Bridge, on a given Wednesday in May. This gratifying communication likewise contained the pleasing intimation that dinner would be on the table at 6.30 for 7 P.M. precisely, and polite request for an early answer, with a friendly hint that evening dress was to be worn on the occasion. Evening dress, forsooth! As if any true Briton would venture to come to a fishmongers' dinner in a suit of dittoes, or even in that hypocritical


apology for evening dress, a Monte Carlo jacket and continuations.

On the morning of the banquet, at the foot of the bridge, you have "read up" the *London Past and Present*; the expansion by Mr. Wheatley, F.S.A., of Peter Cunningham's historic *Handbook of London*. You had a good reason for conning Wheatley-Cunningham. You happen to have been endowed, to a slight extent, with that fatal faculty known as the "gift of the gab"; and the Prime Warden of the Company had, as a supplement to the card of invitation, sent you his compliments, and requested you to respond to the toast of, say, "lobster salad," or "smoked salmon," or "red mullet," or "periwinkles," or something of an appropriately fishy nature.

The late Earl of Beaconsfield was accustomed to remark that the most difficult speech to make was an after-dinner one, seeing that it was usually a speech about nothing; but you venture for once to dissent from the illustrious statesman. You are of opinion that there is a good deal to say, about a great many topics, in a post-prandial oration; and that if you be really in straits for a topic in which to descant, you can always talk about yourself; relate some pleasing anecdotes of your early days; or say something disagreeable concerning something or somebody that you dislike. But Fishmongers' Hall! The enchanting theme! The invaluable Wheatley-Cunningham informs you that the Fishmongers' dinners are among the most famous of the civic banquets, and that frequently they have been the

occasion of grand oratorical displays, and sometimes, it is whispered, of equally grand failures. Even the great Lord Erskine, so brilliant at the bar and in the House, was not a good after-dinner speaker; and on one occasion, at Fishmongers' Hall, he made such a mournful mess of his speech that Jekyll asked him if it were in honour of the company that he *floundered* so. You booked that little jokelet,—a chestnut possibly, but still an edible one; and, besides, everybody has not read Wheatley-Cunningham. You would risk Erskine and the flounders, you thought.

A few minutes before seven you arrive at the foot of the bridge. It is a "Court" dinner; but you miss in the entrance hall the scarlet-jerkined watermen who have won the red ribbon of the river, Dogget's coat and badge. Dogget was an actor of some repute, who in 1721 bequeathed a sum of money for the purchase of a coat and badge, to be rowed for on the 1st of August in every year, in commemoration of the accession of George I. to the throne of these realms. Loyalty to the illustrious House of Hanover will not exempt you from the suspicion that there is somewhat of a solecism in associating the name of the first English monarch of the Brunswick line with the Fishmongers, since George I., it is notorious, was very fond of bad oysters; and it is one of the functions of the Worshipful Company of Fishmongers to overlook Billingsgate Market, and seize and condemn all fish unfit to be used as food. You book that little point to be utilised, if possible, in your speech.



Meanwhile, you are received with smiling greetings by a number of gentlemen in evening dress, who seem to have known you during the best part of your life, so affectionately affable are they. And just as they are welcoming you, there comes over you the half-gratifying, half-embarrassing impression that you are being hovered round, inspected, reckoned up, and generally taken stock of, by a Golden Beadle. You are old enough to remember when small boys were mortally afraid of the beadle; and when that functionary wore a huge cocked hat and a scarlet waistcoat and, when he was not carrying his wand of office with the gilt knob at the top, bore in his grip a penny cane, the terror of the young and turbulent. So you grew up, in wholesome veneration, mingled with a little dread of all beadles—Parish beadles, Ward ones, and Inns of Court ones. Often have you gazed with earnest eyes at the imposing beadle of the old India House in Leadenhall Street who, it was rumoured, was a toastmaster at night. The beadle of the British Museum was also one of your early familiars; and you have even bowed to the beadle of the Burlington Arcade. But this is a sadly irreverent age. Small boys may fear, but they have ceased to respect the policemen; and as for the functionaries still dignified by the name of beadles, they are completely ignored by the audacious youth of the period. Why? *Because they have been deprived of their cocked hats.* You met recently on the Victoria Embankment a large contingent of Bluecoat boys marching westward, and bent, you hoped, on some

gamesome errand. They were escorted by an "up-to-date" beadle, whose head-gear, instead of the orthodox cocked hat, was a kind of semi-military *kepi*. The old order changeth; and things generally, so you feel inclined to think, are going to the dogs.

One of the affable gentlemen in evening dress has handed you a folded document, which, on being opened, proves to be a plan of the tables, with the names of all the guests as they are to be seated at the feast; and opposite your own name is a neat little "tick," indicating your post at the board. So, having deposited your hat and coat in the cloakroom, and shaking your head a little mournfully at the sight of so many gentlemen in the first week of the merry month of May divesting themselves of the thickest of ulsters, and even of heavy pelisses, lined with astracan or with sable, you ascend a handsome carpeted staircase, and find yourself in a spacious apartment, crowded with gentlemen—elderly, middle-aged, and young;—and when you have made your bow to the Worshipful Prime Warden, a stately personage, with a handsome, jewelled badge, hung by a ribbon round his neck, you reflect for a moment on a somewhat curious phenomenon apparent to you, while the Prime Warden is receiving his guests.

If truth must be told, this is not by any means the first time that you have been bidden to a banquet at Fishmongers' Hall. Indeed, your remembrance will carry you back to a period full five-and-twenty years since, when you were first privileged to behold Walworth's statue and dagger, and the wonderful piece

of broidery known as the "pall" or "herse" of the Fishmongers', which dates from the time of Henry VIII. A generation since, so it seems to you, the worthy Fishmongers, physically speaking, were apt to be bald of head, and to run to amplitude of—well, waistcoat. Gentlemen of patriarchal age were also pleasantly plentiful among the Court of Assistants, and now and again, a long white beard, worthy of Lionardo da Vinci, or King Lear, was visible; but moustaches were few and far between. They have changed all that in the City, generally, and at Fishmongers' Hall in particular. Half pleased, half astonished, you notice this May evening that, although the patriarchs have not vanished, and bald heads are here and there manifest, there are members of the Court whose juvenility of appearance, and general up-to-date smartness, induces the persuasion that Fishmongers' Hall has been invaded by a contingent of "mashers" from the Bachelors' Club. There cannot be any mistake about it. The "mashers" *are* Fishmongers, and not guests; since, oddly enough, you know personally, or by sight, four-fifths of the invited gentlemen present.

The banquet is one most gracefully held in honour of Literature and Art; and there must be some twenty Royal Academicians present, together with a goodly gathering of authors, newspaper editors, and, at least, one poet. He is an amiable poet, refreshing to look upon, and does not bite, unless the accuracy of his scansion be impeached. Then there is pointed out to you the gallant general who will return thanks for the Army.

He must be well on in the sixties, but is certainly no masher to look upon; and the same may be said of the equally gallant admiral who, in due course, will respond for the Navy. This distinguished officer has indeed sacrificed to the Graces by growing a full and glossy beard, which is not yet grey. An admiral with a full beard? Such a portent could scarcely have been told in Gath thirty years since.

When, after an intimation with a sonorous voice in the distance—can it be that of the beadle or of the toastmaster?—the guests troop into the great banquet-hall, and you manage by dint of eyeglass to find at the table the card corresponding with your name printed on the plan, you discover with flustered feelings that your next neighbour to the left is the Chairman of the School Board for London. Conscience makes a coward of you. With trembling remorse you find yourself mentally confessing that, educationally speaking, you have not mastered any kind of “standard,” and that if you had to pass an examination for the post of a tide-waiter or a turncock you would in all probability be plucked. The more you look at the Doge of the School Board Senate the more strongly are you convinced that your speech will be a lamentable, or a ludicrous, *fiasco*. Throughout its delivery the eye of the fearsome potentate of school-books, slates, maps, and the black-board will be upon you.

But why, it may be asked, should you feel such extreme perturbation? You have been tolerably well educated? You haven’t. You know how to construct

a sentence grammatically? You don't. You never knew five rules in Lindley Murray's Grammar, nor in any other grammar of the English language; and you are perfectly certain that when you rise to speak with the School Board Chairman's eye upon you, the accusatives will all skate hopelessly away from the nominatives; the abstract nouns will resolve themselves into so many concrete stammerings and "trying back," while the subjunctive mood, like Morality in the *Dunciad*, will expire unawares.

Well, *carpe diem*: there is no use in running away and losing a good dinner. Embrace the opportunity, enjoy the time, work your way discriminatively through the bill of fare; preferring clear turtle to thick, eschewing the delicious, but too generous milk punch served therewith; avoiding cucumber with the salmon; partaking only gingerly of the *entrées*; and thinking twice before you yield to the fascinations of ice-pudding. But you look upon the champagne when it is dry, and sip tenderly perhaps one glass of Madeira, as old as the battle of Salamanca. There may be "mashers" among your hosts, but there are no juvenile wines here I promise you; the vintages are all potent, grave, and reverend signiors. Ancient servitors of the Company flit behind your chair and whisper in your ears comfortable legends bearing upon rare hocks that gurgle in the glass when poured out; peculiar sherries that the Allied Sovereigns and Marshal Blücher have tasted, and port that is crusted and bees-winged; that is tawny and in its way as patriarchal as the most venerable

member of the Court. Who drinks port nowadays? you may have frequently heard it sneeringly inquired. All you can say is that the rarest of rare old port—such port as inspired Blackstone when penning his Commentaries; such port as you get at St. John's, Newfoundland—will not be without its patrons this evening. There are ten thousand pipes of port, you have read in the papers, that will soon be offered for public sale in London. Be assured that if that port be of the right sort every one of the pipes will find its purchaser at a rotund price.


All this while the banquet is being discussed with much heartiness and merriment; you mark how the ripple of conversation rises to a pleasant surge of prattle just about the time when the whitebait has been served, or the first bumpers of Pommery and Greno, or Jules Mumm, Extra Dry, have gone round. Of all keys that will unloose the human tongue and unlock the human understanding, good champagne is the easiest and the safest. Old Sir Theodore Mayerme, King James the First's physician, used to say that all wine was poison, but that bad wine was sudden death; still, of bad examples of the vintage of Epernay, it may surely be said that they mean the protracted and agonising tortures of gout, and of a dozen other members of "the Painful Family of Death, more Hideous than their Queen." You will not meet any members of that painful family at Fishmongers' Hall; nor, indeed, at the board of any guild eastward of the Griffin. The spuming chalices at London Bridge, having made the hearts of

the guests glad within them, there is, of course, much laughter, and a good deal of story-telling. The much-dreaded School Board Chairman is an abstainer; but, for all that, he has his share in the hilarity, and enjoys it. It is a capital thing to laugh and to tell stories at dinner; joyous speech helps digestion, and you don't eat so much if you converse during the repast. That most disastrous personage, the glutton, is generally taciturn at table. He eats, or rather he "stokes" his meal, till the veins in his forehead swell, and his eyes grow glassy, and he breathes hard. You prefer the people with moderate appetites, who laugh and jest as they feast. Has not the philosopher told us true when he counsels us to laugh whenever we can, because we never know how soon the time may come when we shall have occasion to weep?

By and by, when the dinner is concluded, and the dessert is handed round, they will give you magisterial old burgundies and claret, with the true Bordeaux bouquet—the bouquet which should be subtly suggestive of the scent of the violet and the flavour of the raspberry. But ere the time for Laffite and Clos-Vougeot arrive, it will be announced in trumpet tones by the toastmaster that the Prime Warden wishes as a hearty welcome to all his guests to pledge them in a Loving Cup; and then there makes the circuit of the tables a number of tall goblets of silver-gilt, filled with some mysterious compound, the secrets of which have never been divulged by the Company's butlers. Most of the civic guilds have their own particular loving cups, made from in-

redients the nature of which is never communicated to the profane vulgar. But as regards one Company, the tradition is to the effect that the original cask containing the mixture for the loving cup was laid down in the year 1667, and that the beverage itself is composed of equal parts of burgundy, Lisbon wine, curaçoa, nectar, ambrosia, cognac, rum, arrack, and Apollinaris. An irreverent American tourist once ventured to make the rash assertion that the Mansion House loving cup contains, in addition to claret, burgundy, and maraschino, a considerable infusion of treacle, old tom, ginger wine, and Nubian Blacking; but this is clearly a baseless calumny. It is generally understood, on the other hand, that some of the civic loving cups have very antique foundations.

Men laugh and revel, the poet tells us, till the feast is o'er; then comes the reckoning, and they laugh no more. There is obviously no bill presented to you after a banquet at Fishmongers' Hall; there is no collection; *but* there is a reckoning in the shape of speech-making interspersed with pleasant songs and glees and violin recitals. The loyal and patriotic toasts having been effectively proposed by the Prime Warden, the Navy, the Army, the Reserve Forces, and the Houses of Parliament, are eloquently responded to by representatives of those bodies. An eminent Royal Academician returns thanks for "Art"; and a gaunt individual, with spectacles and long red locks, says something about "Literature." Then you yourself, having the fear of the Chairman of the London School Board always before



your eyes, having blundered and stumbled through half a dozen sentences of incoherent platitudes about what you will be glad to forget next morning, depart from the hall of feasting; light a cigar in the vestibule; accept with gratitude a parting *cadeau* from the Company in the shape of an elegant casket of walnut wood full of candied sweetmeats, and come forth into the nocturnal world of LONDON UP TO DATE.

THE DERBY

I WILL not be so impertinent as to inquire what may be the things the first happening of which makes the most ineffaceable impression on a lady's memory. We men folk, however, usually preserve a keen remembrance of primary events in our lives. The first night at a big school; the rough cross-examination as to your parents' names and station in society, and the exact amount of the pocket-money which you have brought with you. These you will scarcely forget. If you be a smoker, you will never forget your first cigar, and how dreadfully sick the three-ha'penny Cuba, smoked on board a Gravesend steamer, made you, say, fifty years ago. As regards love matters, men, I take it, have longer memories than women; and they preserve an acute, keen, and abidingly sore remembrance of the first young lady who jilted them, or the first who was kind enough to say that she would regard them as brothers, but in no more affectionate light. I think, too, most of us are not apt to forget our first fish dinner at Greenwich; and how the salmon cutlets—it could not have been the champagne—disagreed with us the next morning. Can you recollect your first silver watch, with the guard made from the

plaited hair of a dear sister?—a watch which you not only exhibited to your schoolfellows, but also drew from your pocket, in secret, twenty times a day, to open and shut it, and fondle and kiss the chain. I can. I am sure, too, that you recollect your first pantomime just as vividly as you do the last grand Christmas spectacle produced by Sir Augustus Harris at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.

But I have reserved for the last, an event which very few Englishmen I should say—that is among the classes who do not think it wicked to witness a horse race—ever forget. I mean your first Derby Day. Pull yourself together; bid the roaring looms of Time be mute for a moment; indulge in a little introspection; and the name of the winner of the first Derby you ever saw will rise up before you, a beneficent Jack-in-the-box. My first Derby winner was a horse called Voltigeur; and although I have no Racing Calendar on my shelves, there is no need for me to consult the few horsey books I have—"Stonehenge," Samuel Sidney, and the like—to recall the year when Voltigeur carried off the Blue Ribbon of the Turf. With a dear brother, who has been dead more than thirty years, and a renowned bass singer of the period just named, the late W. H. Weiss, did I undertake my first journey to Epsom to see the Derby run.

It was a gloriously sunny last Wednesday in May, and we agreed to go by road—rather a costly project, as none of us enjoyed a superfluity of shekels. Being, however, young, in the highest health and spirits, and

on pleasure bent, we resolved for once on a neck-or-nothing outing. We could pinch a little afterwards, we thought, to atone for the reckless prodigalities of Epsom Downs; so we covenanted with a friendly livery stable-keeper at Camden Town to let us for the day a one-horse vehicle ample enough to accommodate three passengers. It called itself a phaeton; but whether it had a substantial claim to that aristocratic appellation, or whether it was a kind of combination of a gig, a dennet, a stanhope, a tilbury, a dogcart, or a one-horse chaise, I am not prepared, at this advanced period of life's evening, to come into any court of conscience, and make affidavit. At all events, the conveyance held us three very comfortably. It was Weiss who first took the reins. He was short-sighted, and drove very badly. My brother drove a little worse; and I could not drive at all. Somehow or another, I never could ride or drive, or even trundle a hoop, or wield a bat, or catch a ball in anything but a hopelessly clumsy and imbecile manner.

I remember, once, being lowered into a boat with half a dozen companions, mostly ladies, exclusive of rowers, from a passenger steamer in the roadstead of Vera Cruz, in Mexico. The tiller-ropes were put into my hands, and I was bidden to steer to shore. Of course, I steered the wrong way, and brought the boat well up against the basement of the Castle of San Juan de Ulloa. A shriek of indignation, mingled with scorn, from my fair companions and the rowers, incited me to try back; and I steered the confounded wherry right into the


paddle-wheels of the steamer which had brought us from Havana. I was at once ignominiously deposed from the proud position of man at the helm ; and, upon my word, I think it was a lady from New York, in a large auburn chignon, and a crinoline as big in degree as the Kolokol of the Kremlin, who successfully guided the boat to the wharf at Vera Cruz.

This slight digression will serve as a sufficient explanation as to why I did not venture to take a turn at driving the anomalous conveyance in which we went to see Voltigeur win the Derby. There is a proverb as to a Providence which is said to watch over drunken men. We three pilgrims to Epsom went and returned sober enough ; still, some kindly Fates must have watched over the two charioteers, who successively took the "ribbons." We bumped a good deal, and got "chubbed" often enough, and were sworn at in a most discourteous manner. But in the end we got through our ordeal without a mishap, and brought back the horse and trap safely to Camden Town. Our steed was a gaunt, long-legged animal, with a fiddle-case head, straight shoulders, drooping quarters, and a switch tail. I shall never forget when we took the equipage home, and the stablemen had unharnessed this Rosinante, and removed his blinkers, how the brute turned the fiddle-case head towards us three, and gave us One Look ! He didn't speak—poor brute ! he could not speak—yet was that look most eloquently articulate. It said unmistakably : "You precious duffers !"

Let me hint that our expenditure on this, my first

Derby Day, although riotously extravagant when our existing means were considered, did not reach any serious pecuniary figure. Indeed, we only paid thirty shillings for the hire of the horse and trap. We lunched from a picnic basket, which our landlady at Camden Town had carefully packed up for us,—Weiss bearing his share of the cost—and which contained some pressed beef, a dressed crab, a nice, crisp salad, some cream cheese, a crusty loaf, a few hard-boiled eggs, and some Allsopp's pale ale. The total cost was under fifteen shillings. My brother drew "Voltigeur" in a sweepstake on the course, and won a pound; so that, on the whole, we had not to pinch very sorely on the morrow of the festival.

I have no kind of remembrance of the number of Derbies that I have witnessed in the course of the last forty years; I am as great a "duffer" in racing matters as I am in riding and driving; knowing nothing of the state of the odds, and being, as a rule, totally indifferent as to what horse wins or loses, either at the Derby or at any other of those races, in the enjoyment of which the eminently "horsey" English Public absolutely revel. I suppose, however, that I have witnessed twenty races for the Derby; and I have never once travelled by rail. I have made one of a party in landaus and barouches, two-horsed and four-horsed. I have driven down in hansom cabs, and once in a good old-fashioned "growler," and in that humble, but comfortable equipage, we passed a most enjoyable day. Once also, I remember going down in a highly festive fashion, with poor Edward Sothorn, the never-to-be-forgotten "Lord Dundreary."



Now, I may confess once for all, that I am endowed, and perhaps afflicted, with a somewhat hasty and "pesky" temper. On this particular Derby Day, Sothern, the kindest, but still the most provoking of practical jokers, was as full of mischievous pranks as an egg is full of meat. He offered to bet me a guinea, before we reached Clapham, that I would lose my temper, and lose it badly, before 2 P.M. "But why, my dear Sothern," I asked, "should I lose it? The weather is beautiful; I did my day's work by getting up at six this morning; I am in the best of all good company, and I haven't got a penny on the race." "Never mind," persisted Lord Dundreary, "I will bet you one guinea that you will blaze up like a box of vesuvians thrown into the fire before 2 P.M." I seldom wager; but for the fun of the thing I took the bet. It was half-past one when we reached the course; and one of the officious red-jackets who haunt the Hill stepped forward to give me the customary brush-down. I strolled a few paces onward; when another red-jacket pounced upon me, and, notwithstanding my expostulations, brushed me down again, hissing meanwhile as though he were grooming a horse. I essayed to light a cigar, when a third brush-fiend was upon me; but when a fourth made his appearance, brandishing his implement of torture, the dams of my long pent-up temper broke down, and a torrent of adjectives, the reverse of complimentary, flowed over the fourth brush-demon. My wrath was at its height, when I found myself quietly tapped on the shoulder, and beheld the maliciously chuckling counte-

nance of Sothern. "I will trouble you for one guinea," he said, and proceeded to explode with laughter. Of course he had followed me about, and fee'd the brush-fiends to harry me to desperation.

Yes, I have done the Derby, as American oyster saloon keepers proclaim of their bivalves, "in every style"—gigs, landaus, barouches, hansoms, shandrydans, a private omnibus, a wagonette, a brougham, the box-seats and the back-seats of drags, in all manner, indeed, of four-wheeled and two-wheeled machines, save a railway train. I could never, in my young days, muster up sufficient resolution to walk to Epsom, in what is known as "honest-man" fashion; but I remember once, disguised in very shabby garments, in the company of Henry Alken (the well-known race-horse painter, who equipped himself for the purpose in the garb of an ostler who had fallen on evil days), spending on the Course and its purlieus the whole night *before* the Derby. Such a fearsome Pandemonium I never witnessed in my life; and I hope that I shall never witness such squalid, and such profligate horrors again. I have tried to blot out the appalling scenes from the tablets of my memory. Still, ever and anon, they recur; and I see the Epsom Inferno again, as in a glass, not darkly, but in a crimson haze. The scenes of riot and ignoble revelry—scenes which even the police did not care to meddle with, or to take official cognisance of—come up to me with unsolicited, but irresistible distinctness.


Some ten years since, happening to be the guest of a certain hospitable host, at a house well known more than

two hundred years ago to Mr. Samuel Pepys, Clerk of the Acts to the Admiralty, close to Epsom Town, and called The Durdans, we strolled, one bright spring morning, before lunch, on to the Downs, and steadily "walked" the Derby course. The cheerfulness, the stillness, the balmy air, the few pearly cloudlets set in the blue sky, the singing of the birds, the happy peace and innocence of the fair English landscape, were suddenly, in my mind's eye, overcast by masses of confused life, now black, now lurid red. Ruffianly, violent, and ribald language—fighting, swearing, drinking, gambling—horrible to remember. It was the phantom of the Night Before the Derby.

But Epsom, I may possibly be reminded, is in the county of Surrey, sixteen and a half miles south-west of London. How then can the Derby Day have anything to do with London "Up to Date"—a very large portion of which gigantic metropolis is in the county of Middlesex? I answer: Everything. On the Derby Day, and to a smaller, but still considerable extent, on the Oaks Day, London transports itself bodily to Epsom Downs. You see scarcely anything of the rural element at the Derby. The "County Families" may be there; but they do not affect airs of provincial supremacy, as they are apt to do at some other race meetings. I have seen inscriptions on the stands at York and Doncaster, "For the County Families only," and have trembled, with respectful awe, at the portentous proclamation. At Epsom, the county element is completely swamped by the town one. Even the great professional "bookies"

from the Midlands and the North, who journey by rail to the Downs, and who represent, not only great power of lung, but also an immense amount of capital, are absorbed and, in a great degree, negatived, by the amazing rush of humanity hailing from Cockney Land.

The Royalties, when sad bereavement does not keep them away from the racecourse; the nobility and gentry; the club dandies; the dashing young guardsmen; the old gentlemen from the more sedate clubs; the stock-brokers, and City men generally; the actors and actresses; the artists and journalists; the acrobats, nigger minstrels, and gipsies; the costermongers; the dancers on stilts, conjurors, and the Aunt Sally people; the very tatterdemalions who hang about the carriages to beg scraps of food or to "lift" a silver fork or a tankard if they can, when nobody is looking; the tramps, the pickpockets, all have a London or, at least, a suburban aspect about them. Belgravia jostles South Lambeth; Capel Court and Pall Mall rub shoulders; a contingent from Bermondsey comes down in the same train with a cohort from Highgate; all ranks and conditions of men and women are jumbled together on the Course; even as all ranks and kinds of vehicles are visible on the road, from the regimental drag of the 90th Hussars to the spring-cart of the small East-End tradesman, who drives down his wife and "missus" for a day's outing; from the open landau, with four spanking greys, and postilions in blue jackets, buckskins, and white silk hats, to the free and independent costermonger, with his pal in the "shallow," tranquilly piloting




his "little 'oss," or, perchance, his donkey, through the seething throng.

It is the one great London holiday, which in variety, in cheerfulness, and in cordial good fellowship of all classes of the community, beats hollow, in my opinion, even the merriest of our Bank holidays ; of which very many of our superfine classes do not at all approve, and shut themselves up in elegant, but sulky seclusion on the festivals of St. Lubbock, highly indignant in their own superfine manner because their tradespeople have shut up their shops, and they, the superior ones, have some difficulty in procuring new-laid eggs and hot rolls at breakfast. No such feelings of acerbity mar the enjoyment of the Derby Day ; and pure democracy, while it makes itself manifest in its scores and scores of thousands, has no kind of envy or dislike of its oligarchical or plutocratic neighbours. The races are for everybody ; and the poorest creature on the Course can see the sight, with a little pushing and squeezing, as well as the princes and princesses, the grandees and the millionaires, can see it from their windows in the Grand Stand, or on the lawn before it. Hearty, jovial, social equality are the order of the day ; and for once the short pipe and the regalia are brethren, and the penny Pickwick is quite as good as the Laferme cigarette. Nobody puts on "side," or assumes superior attitudes. If he did he would be chaffed, as the say is, into or out of his boots.

Nor, in my humble opinion, is there very much difference between the Derby Day "Up to Date" and the many Derby days that I have seen. One important

exception must of course be noted. The railway stations now come right up to the Course ; and the trains run with amazing celerity and punctuality, conveying a prodigiously larger number of passengers than they were formerly wont to do. Every year, again, we hear plaintive moans as to the falling-off of carriages, and the poor show of horse-flesh on the road ; yet I will venture to prophesy that the road on the Derby Day of 1895 will be crowded, and joyous, and altogether as enjoyable as the many crowded joyous and hilarious roads of the past. Some pockets may be picked, some watches lost on the Course ; a few heads may be punched, and a few roughs run in by the police, who, again, are mainly Metropolitan police, and bring London "Up to Date" into the midst of West Surrey ; but the only perceptible falling-off in the social aspect of the scene will be a decrease in the offensive horse-play, especially the flinging of nuts and bags of flour at the people in the carriages—horse-play which rendered old-fashioned Derbies extremely uncomfortable. London "Up to Date" in squadrons and platoons, in regiments and legions, and grand armies recruited from every point of the Metropolitan compass, will duly deploy and manœuvre, and march past, and stand at ease at Epsom, always under the watchful eye of the police ; and by eight or nine o'clock in the evening, will straggle back somehow to the realms of Cockneydom, tired, dusty, but—if they have only managed to abstain from the perilous practice of backing the favourite—quite happy.



A FIRST NIGHT AT THE LYCEUM

YOU have but a very indefinite idea as to how you became the proud possessor of a coupon for stall 93 at the Royal Lyceum Theatre for the First Night's performance of a new drama, the plot and characters of which will subsequently be revealed. It is certain that although you have been for years an enthusiastic follower of Henry Irving, and admire him quite as much in comedy as in tragedy—did not Garrick excel in both?—you have no kind of personal acquaintance with that accomplished dramatic artist. You have not even met him in the smoking rooms of the Garrick or the Reform Club, of neither of which institutions you are a member. Thus it is indubitable that the card for the stalls did not come from Mr. Irving.

Scarcely, moreover, can the favour which you have received be due to your being connected with the press; since your brief association with journalism was confined to your having contributed, a long while ago, to the Poets' Corner of the *Chawbacon Gazette*, published at Wiggle-Waggle, Hants. How on earth, then, did you get that most coveted ticket? You surely never bought the precious pasteboard. Stalls, for a Lyceum

first night, are as difficult to obtain as blue diamonds, four-leaved shamrocks, or Great Auks' eggs. Besides, your principles, as regards admittance to theatres, are precisely those adopted with regard to oysters by the renowned Dando. He never paid for the bushels of bivalves which he devoured ; and you never pay—when you are in England, at least,—to go to the play.

Here you are, at all events, right in the centre of the stalls on the evening of a day in a week, month, and year, unnecessary to specify. You have come, purposely, very early ; and gazing round the rows of stalls you are unable for some time to recognise, among the sparse groups of occupants scattered about, more than half a dozen people whom you know intimately or slightly. Yonder, indeed, is old General Gadabout—they really ought to make the gallant old veteran a Field-Marshal—who is supposed to have seen Edmund Kean in *Richard III.*, and who was certainly present—for you saw his name in the newspapers of the time—at Macready's farewell benefit. The General never misses a first night at the Lyceum. By his side, and closely foregathering with him, is young Mr. Protocol Peach-blossom, of the Foreign Office, who, youthful as he looks, and really is, has every right to be considered as a high authority on matters dramatic. He knows the names of all the actors and actresses of London, and can tell you how many of the former are graduates of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and heirs to baronetcies, and how many of the latter are nieces of archbishops or first cousins of viscounts.

Turning round in your stall, you scan, first, the pit; and then, elevating your opera-glass, you inspect the boxes and the gallery. The pit itself presents one solid, serried phalanx of anxiously expectant humanity; and so dense is the mass of these conscientious playgoers that it seems a matter of mathematical certainty that, were an attempt made to wedge one more individual into the pit, another pittance would be wedged out of it, and come bounding over into the stalls. The private boxes are as yet almost unoccupied; but the dress circle, by half-past seven, is filling rapidly; the upper tier is full, and the gallery is crowded. You will not fail to remark that the "gods" are very quiet. They seem to have arrived at a tacit understanding among themselves that the Lyceum is not a theatre to be noisy in; and, again, it is possible that among them, as among the pittites, there may be people who have been waiting at the outside doors since 2 P.M., or earlier, who have brought camp-stools (and copies of *Ally Sloper* to while away the time withal), refreshing themselves, from time to time, with ham-sandwiches, and something from a bottle—something, of course, never stronger than cold tea, or lime-juice cordial and water. Turn again, not Whittington, but First Nighter "on the cheap"—turn towards the proscenium, and you will find the aspect of the stalls completely transformed. The audience have thronged into their places in rapidly succeeding batches; and by eight minutes to eight this, the most luxurious portion of the house, is nearly full. The uninitiated would see in this smiling, well-dressed assemblage, only

so many ladies and gentlemen moving in the "smartest" society; but you know better. Either because you have been at some time or other a linkman, or a hall-porter at a club, or a call-boy at a theatre, or a private detective, you are aware that on First Nights the "smart" people are mainly to be found in the private boxes or the dress circle. Yonder, for example, in a pit-box, is the Baroness Bountiful, with a large circle of her fashionable friends, whom she has bidden to partake of her hospitality on an occasion which, like its many predecessors, can scarcely fail to be memorable. The Royal box is occupied by certain Ineffables, from whom you discreetly avert your *lorgnon*; Royalty very properly objecting to be stared at, save on State occasions.

The stalls, on the other hand, present much livelier interest than is ordinarily excited by a thickly-packed assemblage of gentlemen in faultless evening dress, the majority of them with gardenias or carnations in their button-holes, and ladies in ravishing toilettes. You have often seen similar gatherings of "smart" folks, not only at theatres, but at morning and evening concerts and so forth; and you have generally noticed that while some of the grandees are affably chatting with each other, they regard, and are regarded, with a stony glare by a very large proportion of ladies and gentlemen as handsomely dressed as they. The fact is, that the "classes" are divided into innumerable sections, and that certain sections make it a point of honour not to know other sections. Very often it happens that they are really altogether ignorant as to the identity of the

exquisitely-dressed ladies and the portly or thin gentlemen who, for that evening only, are their immediate neighbours in the stalls; and even if they knew them by sight it would clearly never do for the Duchess of Beaurivage to bestow even a nod on a lady in mauve velvet and diamonds, who might turn out to be Mrs. Stockyard, the wife of a pork-packer from Chicago; or for that acknowledged leader of Brahminical society, Lady Camomile Flowers, to greet with a friendly simper the imposing dame in white satin *broché*, trimmed with pink *chiffon* and gold *passementerie*, and embellished with an amazing wealth of pearls and turquoises, who, unfortunately, is only Mrs. Humper Swag, the widow of an enormously wealthy Queensland squatter. There are four Miss Humper Swags, each of whom has a fortune of three hundred thousand pounds. They are not in society *yet*; but the day may not be far distant when the entire family will be invited to the best balls, receptions, and garden parties in London, and will spend the autumn at Bonassus Castle, in the Dukeries, or at Glen Shorthorn in the Highlands, as the guests of the noble proprietors of those princely domains.

The peculiar characteristic of the concourse in the stalls on this actual First Night is that everybody seems to know everybody else. No frigid silence, no stony glare, no averted gaze of mingled indifference or contempt from the people one does not know, are apparent here. Everybody is laughing or chatting, or shaking hands, or waving salutations to friends in the distance. Yonder bald-headed, bright-eyed, smiling, genial-looking

man is Sir Ophthalmos Blepow, the great oculist. He is conversing affably with grey-haired, handsome Sir George Findout, the eminent solicitor, of Rochester Row, Westminster, who carries the secrets of half the peerage in his waistcoat pocket, and has the other half locked up in the iron safe at his office. Yes; the diminutive gentleman with the leonine mane—it puzzles you to know how, in court, he contrives to tuck his tresses under his forensic wig—is Mr. Blatant, Q.C. Secure him, by all means, if you have any thoughts of going to law with anybody. Blatant, Q.C., is a great favourite with special juries, and has the ear of the Bench besides; and he will get you a verdict to a certainty. But beware of Blatant if he be against you; take care of him in cross-examination; in fact, perhaps the best thing you can do, if Blatant is having you “on toast,” so to speak, in the witness-box, is to be affected with a sudden and acute fit of deafness. The infirmity will at least constrain the cross-examining counsel to repeat every one of his questions; and that will give you time to frame a more or less evasive answer.

How they are trooping in to the stalls now, to be sure! Far away you espy the portly form of Sir John Romney Gainsborough, R.A. The President of the Academy is not in the stalls; but his intellectual countenance is visible in a private box, where he is being made much of by Her Grace of Beaurivage and the Cochin-Chinese Ambassadors. But Lady Camomile Flowers, who will not and cannot know Chicago pork-packers and Australian squatters *until next season*, sits

benignly smiling in the third row of the stalls, and talks the most charming gossip possible to Mr. James Rob Roy Macgregor Barker, the famous impressionist painter, and Mr. Burbage Davenant—he is really the Hon. Fabian Fitzdottrel, the Earl of Muchdoddering's youngest son,—walking gentleman at the Royal Inanity Theatre.

Here they are at last!—the whole bright band of First Nighters,—editors of newspapers and magazines, playhouse-loving Peers and Barts., members of the Garrick, the Beefsteak, and the Bachelors' Clubs; guardsmen, foreign diplomatists, artists, authors, yea, and authoresses galore; for there, in black tulle over black satin, is the renowned writer of fiction, Miss Gruesome Ghastly. You remember the enormous success of her novels, *The Bandit's Bride; or, Hypnotism and Hysterics*, and *The Convict Countess; or, The Coronet and the Cribbed Teacaddy*. Close to her, in crimson brocade, is plump, jovial Mrs. Gladsome Gracious, who has written fifty three-volume novels, from the profits of which she has purchased a mansion in Grandolphus Gardens, S.W., and built herself a lovely country house in the Weald of Kent, and a snug shooting-box in Argyleshire. Another writer of fiction, but of the ruder sex, is Mr. Cairngorm Glenlivet, the well-known salmon-fisher, and owner of the yacht *Killierankie*. Writing, painting, sporting, party and dinner-giving, legal, scientific, medical, dandified, courtly, military, journalistic London, have all their most prominent representatives in the Lyceum stalls this evening.

Close over against you, you become aware of the

presence of a select band of dramatic critics. These formidable personages are not, after all, so very terrible to look upon. For example, Mr. Forcible Feeble, of the *Parthenon*, is quite lamb-like in his aspect. Bulky Mr. Hezekiah Flail, of the *Evening Sledgehammer*, is saying most agreeable things in a shrill treble voice; and old Mr. Goutly, of the *Morning Damocles*, who cannot help an occasional growl in his voice, is evidently in a good temper to-night; since you hear him tell Mr. Chickweed, the rising dramatic author, that the new piece about which all the town has been talking for months, is certain to be an astoundingly brilliant success. Chickweed does not appear to be actually ecstatic with joy at this announcement, in fact, his countenance rather falls than otherwise; and he subsequently takes occasion to remark in an undertone to Sparrowgrass, the dramatic critic of the *Daily Cauliflower*, that Ollendorff Methodman, the author of the long-expected drama, has written a lot of confounded rubbish in his time, and has, in all probability, stolen this particular new play from the French, and spoilt it in the stealing. Ollendorff Methodman will not hear these words of unkind disparagement. The dramatist is the most nervous of men; and it being a fine night, he is just now pacing the Mall of St. James's Park, biting his nails to the quick, hearing imaginary hisses, and rather regretting that the gates of the enclosure are locked, and that he will consequently be unable to drown himself in the Ornamental Water. The oddest thing about

these dramatic critics, and, indeed, about the denizens of the stalls in general, is that although you know all of them quite well, not one of them knows you. You are, in fact, Mr. Nobody, and it is only your head that has come to the Theatre Royal, Lyceum, this momentous night. Somewhere in that head there must be some kind of a mind, and that mind has a pair of eyes.

One at least of these mental organs of vision pierces through the curtain; wanders behind the scenes; ascends a staircase, and enters a room, one end of which is furnished with a huge similitude of a gridiron, behind which cooks, in their white jackets and aprons, are visible at work before a blazing fire. How many years ago was it? you ask yourself, when your long-deceased friend, Mr. John Jones, the well-known sculptor, took you to dine with the "Sublime Society of Steaks." You remember the little chunks of rump steak, served hot and hot; the horse-radish, the port, the potent punch—champagne was strictly prohibited;—the chairman, who wore the robe which Garrick donned in *Richard III.*, and who on that particular occasion was, you think, a famous physician, Sir Charles Locock. Quite as distinctly you recall the mock-heroic speeches and the free-and-easy songs; but, distinctest of all, you recollect that among the Sublime Steaksters you met that night, were two elderly gentlemen, each of whom told with a strong northern accent many a droll story. The name of one of these facetious members of the Society was John, Lord Campbell; the other was Henry Brougham.

But the play—the play is the thing. The house is packed from floor to roof : the flower of English rank and intellect are all here, their eyes bent on the curtain. There is the silence of intense curiosity—a respectful expectancy, an earnest hope that another glorious Lyceum triumph is about to take place. The curtain rises on an admirably painted view of a Spanish *Plaza* by moonlight. There is a window brightly lit up, and in front of it a balcony, in which there is a lady in a mantilla. Enter a tall figure in a mantle, with a slouched hat ; he carries a guitar, the strings of which he begins to touch, and serenades the *Señorita*. Enter from the house an ancient gentleman of noble aspect. Apparently he is incensed with the tall gentleman in the mantle, who throws down his guitar. Swords are drawn and a desperate combat follows—the lady in the balcony screaming pitiably meanwhile. The old gentleman is killed ; the tall figure in the cloak disappears ; but, roused by the lady's screams, all the windows of the houses are thrown open. The inmates descend with lanterns and torches ; a crowd gathers ; the City Guard arrive ; a procession of cowed monks bears off the corse of the murdered gentleman ; and the scene closes on a splendid, although lugubrious spectacular effect.

There is plenty of sparkle and merriment, combined with darkest tragedy, however, in the four succeeding acts. The tall gentleman in the cloak turns out to be a Spanish grandee of incurably dissolute manners, who has a comic servant who makes the house roar with his

witticisms. Then there are two tragic heroines, and one light comedy lady, who marries the comic gardener, and on her wedding day indulges in an innocent, but still reprehensible flirtation with the profligate grandee. Just about the time of the flirtation scene, which is received with tremendous applause, Mr. Ollendorff Methodman, the dramatist, the night being still fine, has shifted his quarters to the Victoria Embankment, which he perambulates, between the Savoy Hotel and Charing Cross, in such a very excited manner, that Policeman X 199 follows, and keeps the wariest of eyes upon him. In Act the Third there is a sumptuous representation of a grand festival, given by the profligate Don to his friends; and in Act the Fourth we have the moonlight *Plaza* again, with the equestrian statue of the ancient gentleman whom the Don has slain, and which that reckless rake has the hardihood to ask to supper. The effigy bows its stony head in assent to the invite. In Act the Fifth the marble guest makes his appearance at the supper, and the comic servant hides under the table. Catastrophe; blue fire; shrieks of remorse, and the wicked libertine descends into Tartarus in the arms of the stony visitant. Immense success; everybody in raptures; and the papers the next morning are full of enthusiastic accounts of the new Lyceum play, *The Statue*. Don Juan—Mr. Henry Irving. Donna Elvira—Miss Ellen Terry. Don Ottavio—Mr. William Terriss. Zerlina—Miss Helen Forsyth; and the Commander—Mr. Arthur Stirling.

FIVE P.M. : A BALLOT AT A PALL MALL CLUB

To obviate the possibility of any doubts touching the exact locality of the Senior Jupiter Club, Pall Mall, you will allow me, perhaps, to set down at the beginning of this brief descriptive essay a few topographical particulars. The Senior Jupiter is on the south-west by north-east side of the handsomest street in London, on the same side with the War Office, the Travellers', the Junior Spiders' Club, the branch offices of the Babylon, Chicago, and Calcutta Banking Company, Limited, and the shop of my esteemed purveyor of Havana cigars, Mr. Henry Wilson. Now you will have the clearest of ideas touching the precise locality of the typical Pall Mall Club, a few phases of which I am about to sketch. The Senior Jupiter is a palatial mansion, four storeys high, designed by the late Sir Palladio Vitruvius Smiff, R.A. : the architect, you will remember, to whom we owe the Theatre Royal, Hatton Garden, and the cavalry barracks at Mile End ; Lord Fortinbras's sumptuous mansion, in Piccadilly, and the South Lambeth Union Workhouse. If Sir Palladio had a fault, it lay in a little too much redundance of decoration and in occasional incongruity of style. Thus, the basement of the Senior Jupiter is

austere Doric ; the mezzanine is Ionic ; the first floor Byzantine ; the second Gothic-Renaissance ; the third Tudor ; and the attic Early English. The general effect of the façade is pleasing, although somewhat perplexing to the eye ; and, albeit there is a sense of rich colour in the bright yellow curtains to the stained glass windows of the morning-room facing Pall Mall, objections have been raised by purists to the lancet windows, or rather slits in the Ionic portion of the front.

The internal arrangement of this grand structure will be dwelt upon presently ; let it suffice, for the nonce, to hint that, like the architectural scheme of the exterior, they are, perhaps, although consistently splendid, a little mixed. The Senior Jupiter, or—as its older members proudly call it, *The Jupiter*—taking no account of a proprietary club, the Jupiter Junior, in St. James's Square hard by, was originally started, on quite a humble scale, in Cannon Row, Westminster, in the reign of George IV. ; and as I find, on consulting the original list of members, that the club, in its infancy, was joined by, among others, Viscount Castlereagh, William Cobbett, Sir Francis Burdett, Lord Liverpool, "Orator" Hunt, Lord Byron, the Earl of Eldon, Bishop Blomfield, William Hone, Dr. Parr, the Duke of Bedford, and Benjamin Disraeli the Younger, you will at once see that the Jupiter was not, in its origin, a political institution. What the opinion on public affairs of the majority of its members at present may be, I am sure I do not know.

The club numbers a thousand members ; the entrance

fee being fifty guineas, and the annual subscription twelve. Elections take place by general ballot of the members ; and, on the whole, the Senior Jupiter is a club rather difficult to get into. For example, certain prejudices exist in certain cliques among the members, against stockbrokers, solicitors, wine-merchants, Turks, Armenians, educated Baboos studying at the Inns of Court, paragraphists of society papers, retired majors of the 96th Lancers, and Chinese "bucket-shop" keepers, who are too accomplished proficient at fan-tan, euchre, and poker. Proprietors of quack medicines are also looked upon askance ; and a *lion comique*, or the landlord of an East-End gin-palace, would have but a very faint chance of election in this equally select and sumptuous place of resort for the aristocratic, the cultured, and the wealthy. As for artists, men of letters, and journalists, the sky would rain blackballs if such "poor white trash" dared to come up for ballot.

The candidate who may be considered as the likeliest to obtain admission to these somewhat fastidious groves of familiar intercourse is he about whom the very least is known, but who is supported by a highly respectable and affluent proposer and seconder. The *protégé* of a member of the Episcopal Bench, a Lombard Street banker, a County Member, or a Fellow of the Royal Society, need trouble himself very little about the contingencies of being defeated at the ballot. The odds might be stated as about seventy-five to one that he will not be "pilled." At the same time, I should respectfully advise him not to part his hair down the middle ; not

to be in the habit of perambulating Pall Mall in a suit of "dittoes" and a pot-hat; and not to wear fancy shirts, nor a horse-shoe pin in his cravat. A diamond ring may often mean destruction to his hopes; and it may be hinted that it will be much better for the gentleman who seeks the suffrages of the members of the Senior Jupiter, if he have some other patronymic than Smith. Should he belong to that numerous and historic family he will, if he be wise, when his name is put down in the parchment folio appointed for the purpose, suggest to his proposer to enter him as "Smyth," "Smythe," "Smijth," or even "Smith-Smith." If he be put up as "Smith" pure and simple, the day will not pass without at least half a score of elderly gentlemen, bearing the same appellation, vengefully growling to one another in the coffee-room or the smoking-room—"Another confounded fellow called Smith put up;" or "I am not going to have my letters opened by the wrong man—we have too many Smiths already. Let him try the proprietary place over the way. This is a members' club; hay?" The odds are a great many to one that the latest outsider with the name of Smith will come to grief at the ballot-boxes.

By the way, this being a Thursday afternoon, during the Parliamentary Session, there is a ballot on, between 2 and 6 P.M., at the Senior Jupiter. Let me see; where is the list of gentlemen whose names are to be submitted to the fearsome arbitrament of a number of favourable, or adverse, balls of pith; all of one hue, but technically classed as "black balls," if they are popped into the

division of the ballot-box labelled "No." About a dozen candidates are up for election, and with divining-rod finger one runs down the list in order to ascertain whether the catalogue contains any people whom you like or would like to know, and for whom you propose to vote; as against others whom you don't know, and consequently hate, or whom you do know, and logically detest, even more bitterly. Aha! Here is old Bilberry, the millionaire manufacturer of vegetable-ivory button-shanks, at Fogley-in-Furnace. For a long time you have been aware of Bilberry; for is he not one of your fellow-members at the United Fogies', in King Street, St. James's? Bilberry is the man who goes to sleep during his dinner, and wakes up with a snort between the *entrée* and the roast. He has a habit, too, of snoring in the library; of monopolising as many of the evening papers as he can sit upon, or tuck under his arms, while he is reading his *Globe*, as a whet or relish to the others; and sometimes he takes off his shoes in the reading-room, and examines his socks, curiously. Away with Bilberry! so far as your individual negative is concerned.

"Sir Hubert Stanley. No occupation, Guards', Beefsteak, Garrick, Bachelors', Polyanthus, White Kid-Glove clubs. Proposed by Sir Roger de Coverley, Bart.; seconded by Lord Nozoo." Why, of course! A more eligible young fellow of seven-and-forty, with a delightful house in Park Lane, and who is noted for his snug little dinners, and his sprightly little whist parties afterwards, it is difficult to imagine. You will vote for Stanley without hesitation; but, ha! whom have

we here! "Admiral Grumps, K.C.B." No; Admiral Grumps, this is no place for you—your repute has spread through Club-land. You were a very valiant sea-captain no doubt, in the days of Blake, Sir Cloudesley Shovel, Boscawen, Rodney, and the like. But that was so very long ago. Commander Grumps, although a strict disciplinarian, was the most courageous and smartest of captains. Admiral Grumps, K.C.B., is about as peppery, cantankerous, quarrelsome, and generally disagreeable an old gentleman as can well be met with on a foggy day in Long Acre. He belongs to about half a dozen clubs, apparently for the purpose of making himself and other people uncomfortable at the institutions in question. The Admiral is continually bullying the waiters; harrying the steward; making the butler's life a torment to him; and bombarding the Committee with letters of complaint. The club stationery, the newspapers and magazines subscribed for, the books added to the library, please him no more than the tomato soup, the fried soles, the pickles, and the claret-cups. He is altogether the kind of Admiral to write a nice complimentary little obituary about when he departs this life, but to give a very wide berth to when you meet him in club circles.

But attention! It is five o'clock, at the height of the season; the candidates' list, from which I have only extracted two or three names, is a somewhat heavy one. There are some gentlemen from the Emerald Isle to whom it is shrewdly conjectured violent opposition will be offered by other gentlemen, also from Ireland.

Pressing "whips" have been sent round by the proposers and seconders to all their friends and acquaintances who are members of the Senior Jupiter, and altogether a very stirring conflict may be anticipated. Members are coming down in animated groups from the two Houses of Parliament, on foot, in broughams, and in hansoms. Some arrive in elegant open landaus and barouches, accompanied by the ladies of their families, who, after kindly, but strongly, admonishing them to vote for or against such candidates as they may desire to be elected, or the contrary, drop the gentlemen and drive off for a placid round in the Park. They will return when the ballot is over, at six, and pick up the gentlemen again. Woe betide the latter if they have not "voted straight," as they were bidden to do! The ballot was never yet an impenetrable veil at any election; and in the case of married members of clubs, the gentlemen either make confession as to the compartment of the ballot-box into which they have placed their little spheres of pith, or else their looks betray them; and they are at once dragged to the bar of domestic justice—a tribunal which usually holds nocturnal sittings, and the judicial bench of which is curtained with cretonne.

Rid your mind at once of the wholly erroneous idea, should you ever have entertained it, that ladies have no influence in controlling the course of club ballots. Many years ago, I was proposed by a well-known dealer in marine-stores as a candidate for membership of the Hot Potato Club, Great St. Andrew's Street, Seven Dials.

It was a most select *cénacle* ; and I had some difficulty in finding a seconder, whom I at last discovered in a highly respected "translator" of boots and shoes in Dudley Street. There was a heavy current of opposition to my return ; and at the election I had no less than seventeen black balls ; but the aggregate vote was a very heavy one, and I got in by the skin of my teeth. Years after this, supping at a fashionable fried-fish shop in Blackmore Street, Drury Lane, I found myself in the company of perhaps one of the most prominent operators in the hot eel-soup trade in the whole parish of St. Clement Danes. He, like myself, was a member of the Roast Potatoes, and, when his tongue was loosened by the genial repast, and something warm and comfortable afterwards, he frankly admitted that he had been one of my opponents at my election, and that one of the black balls placed in the ballot-box, on that momentous occasion, was dropped by his hand. "I am sorry I did it now," he was kind enough to say ; "for you are not half a bad sort. You sing 'Hot Codlins' capitally, and are always on hand for a game of Bumblepuppy. Why did I pill you ? I was bound to do it, sir ; *my wife ordered me to blackball you*, simply because you wrote the atrociously unsatisfactory *denoomong* to that three-volume novel of yours, *The Fifty Daughters of the Horse Leech*."

They have been voting from soon after lunch ; and they are voting now, at half-past five, fast and furiously. The Central Hall of the club—a magnificent vestibule in the Græco-Mauresque style, with horseshoe arches

supported by Corinthian columns, a Renaissance *loggia* above, Gothic clerestories, and a dome of plate glass, painted in stripes of yellow and black—interspersed with emblems of the Rose, Shamrock and Thistle—is crowded with pushing, babbling, laughing, chatting, story-telling, button-holing, rib-nudging gentlemen, old and young, slim and corpulent, bearded, moustachioed, or clean-shaven; but all with the unmistakable *cachet* of Clubland about them. The proposers and seconders of the various candidates have warily ranged themselves on guard, some at the top of the stairs leading into the hall, and the others at the doors of the room in which the ballot-boxes are placed, and remain there hour after hour, skilfully “nobbling” members as they enter. “You will be sure to vote for Simpkins.” “There isn’t a word of truth in the story about Junker having made all his money by black-birding in Polynesia.” “You know that you promised to back Bluppy the day we had that capital dinner at the Star and Garter at Richmond. Bluppy was there, you will remember; and how, to be sure, he made the fellows roar with that story of Lord Thurlow putting on his Chancellor’s wig and gown one night after dinner, and dancing a Scotch reel, while he flourished the Great Seal in a bag, just as George Grossmith used to do afterwards.” “Come along, old man, and vote for Tibby. You have just bought, you know, a little place in Hampshire; they swear by Tibby there. All the county families are fond of him; he goes regularly to the Duchess’s, and you will be asked there.”

Thus, in fragmentary conversation always, cajoling, entreating, but never threatening, do the skilful proposers and seconders do their spiriting. Experienced practitioners in this peculiar and somewhat difficult branch of diplomacy are generally pretty easy in their minds when they can induce the members whom they wish to "nobble" to talk. We are not all Machiavellis, or Talleyrands; or gifted with the capacity of using speech only as a means to conceal our thoughts. Persuade a man to talk, and you will usually find out, in popular parlance, "what he is made of." The Silent Member on a ballot day, at a London club, is to be suspected, mistrusted, and dreaded. Beware of him! If he maintain absolute taciturnity, or responds to your eloquent appeals either with a dry, husky cough, or a brief "Just so," or "Ah! indeed," your case, or rather that of your candidate friend, is well-nigh hopeless. If the Silent Member puts his hands in his trousers pockets, you are a lost man. He will "pill" your friend to a certainty.

In the balloting-room itself, the boxes are ranged on a long row of tables, at the upper extremity of which sits, at his own particular bureau, the indefatigable secretary of the club, who has a bland smile for every member who passes him, and whose name he inscribes in a book; and who, I should say, from lengthened experience, can form a practically accurate opinion as to how many candidates will be elected that day and how many will be "pilled"—and by whom, too. The members pass before each ballot-box in succession.

Some saunter ; some stalk solemnly ; some come up to the scratch briskly and cheerfully ; some walk delicately, like Agag, and seem to cogitate long and anxiously ere they drop the ball of fate into its chosen receptacle ; while others almost fling the ball into the box, and rush away as though they had just done some guilty thing.

Perhaps they have. There are experts in club elections who hover about the other side of the ballot-box tables, and who are said to be able to discern which way a man has voted from the hue assumed by his complexion ; by the trembling or the steadiness of his hand ; by the expression of his eyes and his lips, and even from the manner in which he wears his hat. Be it as it may, six o'clock arrives, and the secretary or the librarian opens the drawers of the ballot-boxes, and reveals the state of the poll. Sir Hubert Stanley, elected : not one black ball. Admiral Grumps, K.C.B., nowhere. Lord Brian de Bois-Guilbert, Plantagenet de Montmorency Guineapig, not elected. His lordship, as a matter of fact, has thirty-seven black balls. Why ? He is undeniably handsome, clever, and well connected. Unfortunately, the world has heard too much lately of him, as a member of divers boards of directors, of more than shady companies, with limited liability, but seemingly with an unlimited ability to gull the public and absorb their money. The Jack-in-the-Box Gold-Mining-Reef, of Originalbonesland, South Africa ; the Money-or-Your-Life Gingerbread Manufacturing Company ; the Universal Pianoforte-Tuning Company ; the Syndicate of

Shell-fish Dealers, and the Telephonic Doll's House and Phonographic Punch-and-Judy Show Companies are among the latest of the financial undertakings with which the noble Guineapig has been associated. Never mind ; there are plenty of proprietary clubs which will hail him as a member of their committees.

FIVE P.M. : A CORNER OF THE WORLD— WESTMINSTER

DID I not fear indignant contradiction, I would say that the south-western extremity of Parliament Street, Westminster, where I stood for half an hour on a recent afternoon, and, watching the passing show, hammered out this paper on the anvil of my mind, was not only a corner, but *the* corner of the civilised world. I know well enough, however, that were I to venture on such a dogmatic assertion, I should be told that the "corner of the world," so far as London is concerned, is to be found at Charing Cross, or at the Mansion House; while others might contend that the real corner is at Hyde Park, close to Apsley House. Controversy, however, on these points might be deferred until a more convenient opportunity. As things stand, I have got my corner here in Parliament Street, and I mean to stick to it till I have said my say.

My readers may be discreetly informed, that one afternoon Self and Partner, after a long day of hard work, fled from the series of cupboards in Victoria Street, in which they were condemned to pass a portion of every year—fortunately not the whole of it—with the intention of

solacing themselves by a visit to a few picture galleries, when the happy thought occurred to them that it would be a very good thing to drive down to Greenwich, and dine at the "Ship." We ventured, moreover, to think that the little holiday might be utilised by seeking after some recipes for Water Zootje, whitebait, and other Greenwich dainties.

I did not tell you, however, that ere we started on our expedition—taking the route of the Westminster Bridge Road, the Elephant and Castle, the New Kent Road, and New Cross—it was necessary to make some trifling travelling arrangements, in the way of sending our charioteer back to the flat in quest of overcoats and wraps in view of the contingency of a wet or a chilly evening. Our Jehu might have gone and returned in ten minutes; but of course, when he reached Victoria Street, he was waylaid, first by a boy from the printer's; and next, by a clerk from a newspaper office in Fleet Street, the one laden with proofs, and the other groaning beneath a burden of correspondence, the writers of which all demanded—some of their number fiercely—immediate answers to their occasionally recondite queries. They shall all be answered in good time. Moreover, the progress towards Parliament Street of our humble conveyance on its return journey was blocked over and over again by the prodigious concourse of vehicles proceeding north, south, east, and west; and it was half-past five before our automedon returned.

When I was a young man I was a tolerably good pedestrian, and could do twenty miles in a day "without

turning a hair," as the saying goes ; but for nearly twenty years I have walked seldom, slowly, and never without pain, for the reason that in a dreadful illness in 1873 I lost entirely the use of my lower limbs, and although I partially recovered such use, I walk "over my feet," so to speak, or "on both sides of the way." Thus, much of modern out-of-door London is to me comparatively unknown ; and when on rare occasions I do contrive to crawl shamblingly through the streets for half an hour or so, I am wonder-struck at the changes revealed to me in London Up to Date, as contrasted with the Great City, through every district of which I used to trudge merrily thirty and forty, and fifty years ago.

Among all these transformations—and their name is legion—I am not aware of one more marvellous than that which I noted at the corner of Parliament Street on the afternoon of which I speak. Of course, when I begin by mentioning the prodigious augmentation of the "traffic" which has taken place in this immediate neighbourhood during the last thirty years, I know well enough that I am liable to be pulled up pretty sharply by philological purists, who will acrimoniously remind me that "traffic" really means exchange or barter in trade, and is a term wholly erroneous when applied to vehicular or pedestrian locomotion. Never mind ; we have long since agreed to call street movement "traffic" ; and for all that purists can say, we shall probably continue to use the word in its now widely accepted sense. I say, then, that the traffic at the corner of Parliament Street, at 5 P.M., is simply gigantic and bewildering.

The omnibuses and road-cars seem to me to be about three times bigger than they were a generation since; and they are always crowded, inside and out. The ladies riding on those "garden-seats," which have replaced the old "knife-boards," look as though they were altogether to the manner born, and had not the slightest idea that, five-and-twenty years ago, no member of the fair sex, above the rank of a servant-girl, would have condescended to travel outside an omnibus.

Long streams of these huge vehicles which look so cumbrous and so overladen, but which, I am told, cause no discomfort to the horses which draw them, are passing up Parliament Street, and proceeding, by the Abbey and the Broad Sanctuary, up Victoria Street to Victoria Station; while another parallel line of 'buses is streaming downwards from the railway terminus, down, down, to Whitehall, through Trafalgar Square and the Strand, citywards. Another stream rolls its wheeled waves over Westminster Bridge, to the Surrey, and from the Surrey side again; while cabs, carts, railway vans, broughams, and landaus; cyclists, tricyclists; cavalry orderlies on prancing chargers; mounted policemen, nursemaids wheeling perambulators; wedding guests, brave in bouquets, fresh from a nuptial feast at the Hotel Windsor, and possibly a hearse or two to remind us that we are mortal, surge by Parliament Square and turn off by the Victoria Embankment to Charing Cross, to Waterloo, and to Blackfriars.

There is a prodigious multitude on foot. Members of both Houses of Parliament, bound to the Palace of

the legislature, which they enter by the portals, both in Old and New Palace Yard; witnesses who have been under examination before Parliamentary committees, civil engineers, architectural draughtsmen, solicitors, and parliamentary agents, and their clerks; barristers, who have been retained as counsel, for or against the proposed Elevated Railway, from the Duke of York's Column, through Waterloo Place, Piccadilly, and Hyde Park, to the Marble Arch; American tourists and country cousins, fresh from the exploration of the venerable glories of Westminster Abbey; a great cavalcade of lady-patrons of the Army and Navy Stores; a regiment of volunteers, possibly, marching for drill in the Park; boys selling the evening newspapers, fruit-sellers, and street-vendors, indeed, of all kinds of small and cheap articles of food; ballad-singers, organ-grinders, beggars, and tramps are mingled in one astounding mass of humanity; with horses, dogs, and wheeled carriages, which, at the first blush, make you think that Chaos is come again, but which in reality are quietly, steadily, and efficiently controlled by a few police-constables standing at the corners of the many diverging roads or in the thick of the crowd of carriages. These stalwart municipals do their duty firmly, and if need be vigorously; but they are uniformly good tempered. Very rarely do they harry the drivers of the vehicles without just and proper cause for so doing; and they are always ready to help females and children across difficult bits of the roadway, and to give information to that floating population of

foreigners and provincials who are continually in a chronic condition of being "lost in London."

I suppose, that with the exception of the guardians of the peace in Japan, and in some of the smaller South American Republics, I have seen and marked the ways of police-constables at street-corners all over the world—from the burly Irishmen who patrol George Street, Sydney, and Collins Street, Melbourne; who guard Broadway, New York, and Chestnut Street, Philadelphia; to the sallow Creoles who do duty at New Orleans—and smoke cigars on duty;—from the police of Havana, in their Panama straw hats and suits of white "seer-sucker," to German, Austrian, Russian, Greek, Italian, Spanish, French, Dutch, and Indian police agents. They have all been more or less familiar to me. Am I drifting into the Jingo condition, I wonder, when I say, that take him for all in all, the London police-constable is the most capable, the honestest, and the best-natured constable that I have met with, and that he deserves much better pay than he actually gets?

"Ah, bah!" you may exclaim, have not the reading public been told all these things fifty times before? Have I introduced a single element of novelty into this oft-told tale of the motley crowd of carriages and people at the corners of every important thoroughfare in London, at the height of the season? It may be so. It very likely is so; and, looking at the enormous quantity of printed matter concerning London that every day, week, and month issues from the press, it practically *must* be so.

Yet you will bear with me, I hope, for two reasons. First, because the scene I saw that summer afternoon, between five and half-past five, was to me, as a pedestrian, quite new, and strange, and wonderful. When I was in town, I traversed Parliament Street, on an average, thrice or four times every day, going to or coming from our flat ; but I traversed the street, for reasons which I have explained, on wheels, and the last time that I made an excursion into Parliament Street on foot was one morning on the day of the opening of Parliament, two or three sessions since, when I went by invitation to breakfast with a well-known firm of wine merchants, who continue the business first founded by Mr. Bellamy, the historic caterer to the House of Commons. It was Bellamy, you remember, who supplied—and at very moderate prices, too—Mr. Sampson Woodfall with his daily breakfasts, dinners, and suppers, at the time when the undaunted printer of *Junius* was confined, by warrant of the Speaker, in the custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms. It was for a curious purpose that I went to the modern Bellamy's. It is the hospitable custom of the firm in question to entertain at a handsome repast, washed down by generous vintages, on the first morning of the session, the Beefeaters, or Yeomen of the Guard, whose duty it has been ever since the time of Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot to explore the cellars beneath each of the Houses on the first morning of the session, in order to make sure that no combustibles or explosives are concealed in those extensive subterraneans. And a very jovial forenoon did I

spend in the company of those scarlet and gold doubletted, trunk-hosed, Tudor Rose-hatted, beruffed halberdiers.

And, finally, there is another plea which I may deferentially advance for describing once more a scene which has been narrated so often and so graphically by other hands than mine own. Musing earnestly as I did for every minute of that half hour, it was impossible that my thoughts should not revert to the Westminster of the past—my own past—and that of history. The great expanse now formed by New Palace Yard, Parliament Square, and the opened-up Sanctuary, now surrounded by splendid buildings, I can remember, when I was young, to have been a *cloaca* of narrow, tortuous, shabby, stifling, and malodorous streets. The block of houses at that very corner of Parliament Street where I was standing was only so many stacks of dingy, tumble-down tenements. The Victoria Embankment was not dreamt of; and in lieu of the spacious and noble bridge constructed by the late Mr. Page, there was old Westminster Bridge, narrow, ill-paved, and inconvenient. The New Palace at Westminster did not exist. I remember seeing the ruins of the old Houses of Lords and Commons which were destroyed in the Fire of 1834; and I recollect when the legislative business of the nation was carried on in a group of makeshift structures, scarcely dignified enough to serve as a parish vestry hall, and at which the members of the existing high and mighty County Council, and the School Board for London, would most assuredly, could

they be asked to transact their affairs in such squalid premises, turn up their ineffable noses.

As for Westminster Abbey, there stretched to the south and the west of that antique fane large tracts of indescribably dirty, profligate, and felonious slums ; and the Chapter House of the Abbey itself, in this generation so tastefully restored by Sir Gilbert Scott, had fallen into a deplorable condition of dilapidation and neglect ; the interior being lined with tiers upon tiers of deal pigeon-holes, crammed with obsolete parchment writs and other processes of the Courts. The corner of Parliament Street, Westminster, but for the towers of the Abbey visible in the distance, afforded a vista of little else save ugliness, unvenerable old age, and squalor ; and yet for all that, it was a Corner of the World when I first kenned it, more than half a century ago ; since by that corner passed to and fro, day by day, when Parliament was sitting, or the Courts in Westminster Hall were open, the greatest statesmen and lawyers of an epoch when there were intellectual giants in the land.

But it was at New Palace Yard and at the portal of Westminster Hall that my eyes peered most curiously through the grand new railings, with the handsome lamps at intervals which were erected a few years ago to form a comely frontage to the wondrous Hall of Rufus. Time was when access to Westminster Hall was free to all and sundry ; when the Law Courts, with the exception of the Court of Chancery, held their sittings in an ugly range of building, designed by

Sir John Soane, the wealthy architect, of whose old curiosity-crammed museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields everybody has heard, but very few people have seen; and who disinherited his eldest son because he had written uncomplimentary criticisms on the paternal architecture in the magazines of the day.

I knew the disinherited George Soane well—a gaunt, sad man, earning a precarious livelihood as a minor poet and playwright. In particular was he the author of the libretto, or “book of the words,” of Edward Loder's most tuneful opera of *The Night Dancers*. His phantom just flits across my mental mirror as I seek for the Soane Law Courts, to the north of the Hall; but they have been swept away, and replaced by some Gothic structure which has an uncomfortably fresh and new-fashioned look when contrasted with the grey old buildings. For hundreds of years, indeed, buildings have been vanishing from the immediate vicinity of Westminster Hall. If you look in old books of engravings you will find that even so late as the middle of the eighteenth century the façade of the Hall was disfigured by a number of rubbishing tenements, book-sellers' shops, wig-makers, and so forth; even as old St. Paul's used to have nestling under its exterior buttresses, cook-shops, pie-shops, and the establishments of dealers in rabbits and poultry. In the seventeenth century, indeed, there were shops inside the Hall itself; and scribes had their desks, and usurers their “pews,” there, sitting at the receipt of custom, and lending

broad-pieces—generally clipped—to spendthrifts always eager to pay high interest.

The far-off Hall brings me a mint of memories. A long procession of State prisoners, preceded by the headsman bearing the axe, with the edge now turned from, and now towards the nobles accused of high treason, sweep across Parliament Square on their way to their trial before the House of Peers sitting in judgment in the Hall itself. Nobles, said I? Amid the crowd of captives destined to lose their heads on Tower Hill, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and in Whitehall—Strafford, Laud, Lord William Russell, Derwentwater, Balmerino, Kilmarnock, wicked old Simon Fraser of Lovat, there rises the shade of Charles the First, King of England. Verily if Parliament Street be not a Corner of the World, it is one of the corner-stones of the History of England.

TEN A.M. AT GREAT GRUBBY STREET POLICE COURT

PART I

You have some business to transact at the tribunal, which gives its name to this chapter; and, upon my word, I don't envy you. Long years ago, Charles Dickens gave the generic name of "villanous" to London police-courts; although, since his time the "villanous" old tribunal in Bow Street has been demolished, and a new and handsome palace of correctional justice has been erected on the other side of the road, on the site of Broad Court. The Metropolitan police-courts, structurally, with their surroundings, may (with the exception of Bow Street), without much exaggeration, be pronounced a scandal to London, and to our much-vaunted civilisation.

The only good things that I can discern in a police-court, are, first,—the worthy magistrates who administer justice there, and mingle their justice with mercy; and, secondly, the gentlemen of the press—I beg you will not call them reporters—who give us day by day such accurate, and, sometimes, such graphic

narratives of the cases brought before those stipendiary Cæsars, who work almost as hard as journalists do, in a vitiated atmosphere, and in "villanous company," for a salary of £1200 a year. Well; Henry Fielding, the author of *Tom Jones*, and one of the first Metropolitan "beaks" of note, only got £300 a year, and he qualified his wage as consisting of "the dirtiest money in the world." The incomes of our modern stipendiaries are at least clean.

Various kinds of business may have led you at ten o'clock this instant morning, to seek out the particular London slum, which is additionally dishonoured by the presence of Great Grubby Street police-court. It may be that you wish to complain to the worthy magistrate of your next-door neighbour, who persists in keeping in his back-yard a number of cocks which crow distractingly every morning; while the lady who inhabits the house on the other side, entertains, in addition to several piratical cats, a parrot which uses language unfit for publication, and, perhaps, an affectionate boa-constrictor, and a merry rattlesnake or two. Possibly, organ-grinders may be your grievance; or you wish to protest against the annoyance caused you by the speculative builder, who is erecting a mansion, nineteen storeys high, over against your dwelling, thus depriving you of light and air, and inflicting additional torture on your nerves by the circular saw-mill, which he has set up on a bit of waste ground for the use of the carpenters and joiners, who are making the fittings for the flats.

It is earnestly to be hoped that it is not a compulsory interview that you are about to have with the worthy magistrate, and that, at ten o'clock, you will not have to surrender to your bail. You will be able to avoid, I should say, such disagreeable contingencies, if you will carefully abstain from assaulting the police in a broil at Piccadilly Circus after midnight; or officiating as managing director of the Bogus Prospectus Extraction of Gold from *Asafoetida* Company, Limited; and, in particular, if you are not connected with any agencies, syndicates, or bureaux for swindling amateur authors out of their manuscripts, or cheating poor little cooks and nursery-maids, who are ambitious to appear on the music-hall stage, and who are often cozened out of all the money they can scrape together by the knaves who profess to be able to procure engagements for them. Perhaps, on the whole, the safest hypothesis that can be adopted to account for your presence at the Court, this Monday morning—be very careful to remember that it is the second day of the week—is, that you are bound on a simple errand of compassion.

The civil, honest, intelligent, and sober young fellow, who drives your brougham, is in trouble. He has a worthless faggot of a wife, who, in addition to drinking overmuch and beating him when she is tipsy, has a propensity for stealing small articles and pawning them; and for such an act of larceny, comprising the appropriation of a feather-bed, a blanket, and a clock, she was given into custody late on Saturday night. Unfortunately, the incensed landlady, the owner of the

stolen chattels, gave the perfectly innocent husband in charge at the same time. It was too late to procure bail, and they were both locked up. So you have come down to Great Grubby Street to procure legal assistance for a man whom you know to be blameless, and to give evidence as to the goodness of his character, if you are called upon to do so.

I am not going to tell you in what district of the Metropolis Great Grubby Street is situated, or even to provide you with any direct indication as to the road you should follow, to find out the exceptionally dingy and squalid Temple of Themis in question. Suffice it to say, that you tumble, so to speak, unawares on Great Grubby Street: a slum which, you may choose to think, is not far from the Euston Road; or just a little more than a stone's throw of Rochester Row, Westminster; or is within pistol shot of Tottenham Court Road; or is a shilling cab fare from Drury Lane Theatre. You find yourself in Great Grubby Street, and that should be enough for you. How horribly the place smells! That is about the first of the impressions which you receive. Everything of an edible, potable, or household-stuff nature, which is vended in the shops, seems to have an unpleasantly "high" flavour.

Many of the shop-windows are unglazed; and the proprietors of the establishments which really have glazed frontages, are in the habit of exposing a large quantity of their surplus merchandise on the foot pavement. Thus, your feet stumble, not like those of Friar Lawrence, at graves, but at sides of bacon, hunks of cheese, barrels

of soft soap, ropes of onions, and baskets full of green stuff, all cheap and all emitting powerful odours. Then, the dried haddocks and the red herrings, and, if it be winter time, the sprats! Then, the reeking perfume of the fried-fish shop at the corner, and the fearfully "loud" emanations from the cats'-meat shop next door; to say nothing of the odour of the teeming population of Great Grubby Street—their garments, and themselves. It happens to be a "London Particular" foggy morning, to boot; and about half-past nine it begins to rain; so the rain beats down on the smoke, and the smoke on the fog; and all three either smirch your face and hands, or go down your throat till you are half suffocated and wholly sickened.

But oh! what a surprise! There are two really handsome shops, oases in this desert of ugly squalor. The shops stand side by side, and both have evidently been decorated regardless of expense. One is kept, so an inscription in very large white letters on the plate glass windows proclaims, by Mr. Crafton Foxifum, and the other by Mr. Weasel Wideawake. These esteemed traders sell neither butter, nor bacon, nor onions; neither cheese, nor firewood, nor fried fish; they both sell Law. In fine, they are both solicitors, in constant and remunerative practice at the police-court opposite, and are both in much request among ladies and gentlemen who are "in trouble" on suspicion of offences against the criminal statutes.

If Charley Lightfingers, popularly known in swell-mob circles as "Nickemquick," is arrested for picking

pockets in a Congregational Chapel during the sermon, his first proceeding, after declaring that he is as innocent as a babe unborn of the offence imputed to him, is to secure the services of Mr. Crafton Foxifum ; and if Bill Bludgeon has been "run in" for about the fifteenth time for savagely beating his wife, it is very often the poor bruised, but still loving woman herself who waits as early in the morning as she can on Mr. Weasel Wideawake, at his office in Great Grubby Street, and instructs him, weeping and sobbing, to come up and speak for the ferocious brute, her husband, who, she plaintively declares, is very good to her when the drink is not in him.

But pray do not think that pickpockets and wife-beaters are the only clients who bring their painfully gathered moneys to Mr. Foxifum or Mr. Wideawake. A London police-court is a sieve through which pass in the course of every year all sorts and conditions of men—ay, and of women and children too. Peers of the realm, officers of high rank in both services, school-masters, ladies of fashion, clergymen, actresses, country squires, tourists from the Continent or from America, may all have occasion to seek the services of one of the two solicitors who impartially divide their attention between their noble or fashionable clients and the thieves and swindlers, and scamps of every grade, who stand in need of legal assistance. Not unfrequently the case to be heard at Great Grubby Street is of such importance that some very distinguished solicitor indeed—say Sir George Findout—comes down in person to

conduct either the prosecution or the defence; nay, even such forensic grandees as Mr. Blatant, Q.C., or Mr. Tully Kikeron may be retained in some unusually prominent cause. The bulk of the legal business, however, at Great Grubby Street falls to the share of Mr. Crafton Foxifum and Mr. Weasel Wideawake.

The two solicitors, although rivals in business, are excellent friends in private life. They are both members of the Betterton Club, and frequently lunch there at 1 P.M. Foxifum has a beautiful villa at Dulwich, where, in the bosom of a smiling family, he grows orchids; and Wideawake, who is a bachelor, is noted for the elegant *pâté de foie gras* sandwiches and strawberry-and-cream high teas, for ladies only, which he gives during the season at his elegant flat in Screech Owl Street. Both these luminaries of the criminal law are educated and high-minded gentlemen; while the magistrates who sit in judgment at the Court opposite are as refined as they are learned. Mr. Rhadamanthus Roe, for example, is renowned as an entomologist, and is supposed to possess a unique specimen of the great dromedary-backed moth; while his colleague, Mr. Minos Yakers, is known as a collector of Elzevirs, and a connoisseur of the old Dutch Masters. You would little think, meeting either the magistrates or the solicitors in polite society, and listening to their sprightly and scholar-like conversation, that they had to pass half their lives in the company of the scum of the earth, and to listen every day to stories hideous

enough to make the blood run cold and the marrow freeze in the spine!

It is Mr. Weasel Wideawake whom you have chosen to defend the unhappy coachman; but his poor old father has been in advance of you; and you find him in the lawyer's office, pouring a piteous tale into the legal ear. He has been a coachman himself,—“which he druv’ Alderman Sir Turtle Stakeley, Barrownight, seven-and-twenty year, and never, either as man or boy, did his Jemmy take a copper as didn’t belong to him.” Mr. Wideawake very soon puts the poor old father and yourself at ease. He assures you that there is not a tittle of evidence against the young man; that the wife only will be convicted, and that her husband will be discharged and leave the Court without a stain on his character. By the way, he adds; it might be well to step over the way at once, as Mr. Rhadamanthus Roe, who sits this morning, is a very punctual gentleman; and the list of night-charges, it being Monday, is likely to be a somewhat heavy one.

Over the way you go, pushing your way through a shabby, steaming crowd, which blocks up all the corridors leading to the Court, and which straggles out over the roadway outside. Then, when you have managed to enter the precincts of the inconveniently crowded court room, and find yourself wedged between two police officers upon a seat fronting the magisterial bench, you discover that among the odours of Great Grubby Street there is yet another one almost inexpressibly noisome and nauseating, with which you have hitherto failed to

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make acquaintance. It is the smell of Great Grubby Street police-court itself, and the people in it. At your back is an area set apart for such of the public as have actual business with the magistrate, or who are interested either as relations or as friends of some persons "in trouble" for some delinquency or another. These spectators are subjected to a very narrow scrutiny by the police on duty at the door ; and if they cannot advance an adequate plea for admission, they are relegated to the corridors, where, as before mentioned, they scuffle and gabble, and impede the circulation. Those who are allowed to be present are all too numerous ; and they are all fragrant with the same dull, vapid, faintness-engendering, sour, and almost stifling smell, in which the odours of old rags, old junk, stale tobacco, stale beer, sawdust, turpentine, and cheese, seem to be for ever conflicting. While you are sniffing, involuntarily, these conglomerated gusts of pestiferous atmosphere, you call to mind Coleridge's allusion to the seventy distinct stench which he smelt at Cologne ; and anon there come crowding on you memories of the terrible stories which you have read about the Gaol Fever of old, when, at the Old Bailey or at provincial assizes, the dreadful fumes from the felon's dock would poison the blood of the Bench and Bar, and sweep judges, jurymen, lawyers, and witnesses to swift death.

There is no Gaol Fever nowadays, and our prisons are models of cleanliness, if not of comfort ; yet, so far as criminal justice is concerned, it is usually administered, both in the assize and session courts, and

especially—always with the exception of Bow Street—in the police-courts, in poky, stuffy, grimy dens, in which it is a standing marvel that those who have any business there can keep their health. Mr. Rhadamanthus Roe has entered his Court; made an affable bow to the solicitors' table, and taken his seat, smiling benignantly all round. A wary officer of police by your side whispers that it is one of Mr. Roe's "good days," and that his Worship won't make it very "hot" for the night charges. The sitting magistrate is a very tall gentleman, middle-aged, and prematurely grey. To your thinking, the chief peculiarity in his personal appearance is his spotless cleanliness; his cuffs and collars are as the fresh-fallen snow; his boots gleam; and could any sunbeam creep in through the grimy windows, the rays would sparkle brightly on the magisterial hat, brushed to a degree of exquisite glossiness. Indeed, you cannot help fancying that the immaculate spruceness of the stipendiary is a kind of protest against his dingy surroundings.

Ah! those night charges! They trail, and draggle, and crawl, and sidle in, and are quietly handed into the dock by the gaoler. Whom have we here? Something that resembles one of the old wooden blocks that used to stand at the doors of tobacconists—a block in full Highland costume, but which apparently has suddenly been endowed with life; then, having become a little too lively, has been subsequently rolled in the mud of many gutters; and has ultimately been conveyed on a stretcher to the police station. You cannot believe him

to be a real son of Caledonia stern and wild. In greater likelihood, he is a descendant of one of those "Mile-enders" whom Theodore Hook describes in the procession that went to congratulate Queen Caroline at her house at Hammersmith, "dressed up as Highlanders, shivering in kilts."

Besides, if he were a real child of old Gaul, no amount of whiskey that he had quaffed would have made him drunk and disorderly, and incited him violently to pummel a cabman, a coffee-stall keeper, and three police-constables in the Pentonville Road. He might have got "a drappie in his e'e"; but, surely, he would never have drifted into the "fou" stage of inebriety. Moreover, he gives the name of John Smith: clearly he cannot be Rob Roy MacGregor Campbell; and the native heath on which he sets his foot must be nearer Pentonville than the Clachan of Aberfoyle. John Smith is sentenced to pay a fine of forty shillings, with the alternative of a month's imprisonment. With the assault on the police the magistrate does not deal; because, from the evidence, it is rather difficult to determine whether it was John Smith who began the fray by butting at, kicking, and biting the guardians of the peace; or whether they opened the ball by battering his head with their truncheons. But that he has a broken head is without doubt.

TEN A.M. AT GREAT GRUBBY STREET
POLICE COURT

PART II

THERE was a reporter of the past, between the 'twenties and 'thirties, who published a book called *Mornings at Bow Street*, embellished with exquisite vignettes and wood engravings, after the drawings of George Cruikshank. Some of the *Mornings* were very humorous, and others very pathetic. Many years afterwards, the late George Hodder, sometime a reporter on the staff of the *Morning Herald*, who was everybody's friend, and occasionally the amanuensis of Thackeray, who dictated to Hodder the *Four Georges*, brought out *New Mornings at Bow Street*, illustrated by John Leech, Kenny Meadows, and other eminent artists; but the letterpress was slightly dull.

There is not much of the humorous, so it seems to you, in the night-charges, which are being investigated this morning at Great Grubby Street; but there is a great deal of the sickening and the harrowing kind to which you have to listen. There is a spice, too, of the grotesque; and, now and again, the pathetic element

is plainly visible. See; here comes Baby Bronzeboots, a female very well and most mournfully known to the magistrate, the usher, the gaoler, the police, the reporters, and, it is to be feared, away from Great Grubby Street, to the matron and female warders of more than one prison. That portion of the public who like to read the police reports may chuckle when they peruse accounts of Baby Bronzeboots's appearance in the dock, as a drunk-and-incapable, or a drunk-and-disorderly, for the tenth, the twentieth, or it may be, for the fiftieth time. What her real name may be concerns you but little. "Baby Bronzeboots" is only one of her innumerable aliases. At Great Grubby Street she has been known, in addition to her pseudonym of to-day, as Joan of Arc, Alice Maltravers, Madge Wildfire, Edith Plantagenet, and Dolly Varden. At the Billingsgate Police Court she is sometimes arraigned as Lucy Ashton, Clara Vere de Vere, and Diana Vernon; but at the Battle-Bridge Court she prefers the designations of Lady Mary Wortley Montague and Molly Lepel; while at Tooley Street she appears sometimes as Godiva de Montmorency, and sometimes as Helen of Troy.

Look at her. Scan her. Listen to what the police have to say about her, and laugh if you can. You see a fragile, slender, delicate little woman, with a wealth of silky auburn hair, and well-cut features, the almost infantile expression of which may have earned for her the sobriquet of "Baby." Unfortunately, the symmetry of her countenance is marred this morning by a black eye, the reverse of lovely, which the police assert she

got by tumbling about in the cell at the station ; and the golden tresses are as tousled and unkempt as her face and hands are innocent of soap and water. One hand at least ; for on the other she wears an extremely dirty lavender kid glove, "gone" at the thumb and two fingers. The imitation jewellery, with which she generally bedecks herself, is safe in the custody of the inspector ; but she has been allowed to retain a huge feather fan with a broken handle, which she twirls mincingly with the gloved hand. A dreadful discoloured, rumpled old dress with a train, which may have been originally of silk, but which has been patched so often with cotton and woollen fabrics that it has almost come to the complexion of miserly Sir John Cutler's silk stockings, which had been darned so frequently with worsted that scarcely any of the original fabric remained ; a muff of some fur, possibly once pertaining to the harmless necessary cat or the cheerful rabbit, and white satin shoes with pink bows—no bronze boots this time—and one of which has lost a heel, complete as much of her costume as is visible. Stay ; she wears a hat—a marvellous structure almost as big, comparatively speaking, as a bicycle, and which is an astounding combination of lace, feathers, ribbons, and artificial flowers. All battered, frayed, and desperately dirty.

It was that hat that got Baby Bronzeboots into trouble late last Saturday night, or rather early on Sunday morning. It occurred to her at that untimely hour to execute a Highland Schottische in the middle of the roadway ; and two belated passers-by were led

to make some sarcastic comments on her performance in general, and her hat in particular. Then Baby "went for" her ungallant critics; but while intent on scratching their faces, one of her shoes came off; and while stooping to pick it up, she fell sprawling, and the hat came to shocking grief. Then she began to scream; then the police arrived on the scene; then a crowd gathered—where on earth do the people come from who, at two in the morning in London, at a minute's notice, are always on hand when any trouble arises; do they come up from the sewer gratings, or down from the moon? Then Baby fought and kicked and screeched more shrilly than ever, and in the end she was locked up.

What has she to say for herself this morning? Well, a good deal; and she talks with a lisping musical voice, and not ungrammatically, interlarding her discourse with little scraps of French. But it is but a rambling, inconsequent, incoherent utterance at the best. She had been to a ball, so she pleads, at the Terpsichore Rooms, and the champagne was too sweet; she never liked sweet champagne. She had called during the day on her solicitor, with reference to the will of her deceased aunt who had left her large estates in the Isle of Skye; and the solicitor gave her a glass of sherry-wine, which went directly to her head. If the magistrate will only let her off this time, she will start at once for Tasmania. She will, indeed; at all events, she will go to Portsmouth, where she has an uncle, who is a Colonel in the Horse Marines.

"What am I to do with you?" says the magistrate, much more sadly than severely. "You have been here more than a score of times, and you are known at every police-court in the Metropolis. You have been imprisoned over and over again; you have been an inmate of I know not how many asylums and refuges." "I hate refuges," interjects Baby; "I'd sooner be in prison." "I am afraid I must send you there again," continued Mr. Rhadamanthus Roe, throwing himself backwards wearily in his chair. "I only wish, my poor girl, for your own sake, that I had the power to lock you up for life." "Thank you for nothing, sir," retorts the unabashed Baby.

The magistrate bends forward to the chief clerk and whispers a few words to him. The clerk shrugs his shoulders; then Mr. Rhadamanthus Roe dips his pen in ink, and is about to write something on the paper before him, when there arises from the seats occupied by the reporters a lady dressed plainly in black, and with a small, unadorned, but very tasteful, black lace bonnet. This lady is very pale; her dark hair is neatly banded over a very broad, massive forehead; she has large grey eyes, and lips with a curious expression of mingled sweetness and firmness. Who can she be—this middle-aged lady in black, with grey eyes, massive forehead, and the gentle, but resolute lips? There is something of the hospital nurse about her; something of the deaconess; something of the superintendent of a home or an asylum, and something of the district visitor. But, predominating over all these characteristics,

there is an indefinable but unmistakable something else that tells you that you are in the presence of a lady of position and culture. She is known here as Miss Glyde. "I will take her, Mr. Roe," she says, in a steady, quiet voice. "But, my dear madam," replies the magistrate, spreading out his hands in a kind of despairing way, "you have had the wretched creature at least twice before." "I know that," replies the lady; "but she is still very young, and while there is life there is hope. I think I have found a new method of dealing with her." "I most earnestly hope that the method will be successful," returns Mr. Roe, with a smile that ends in a sigh. Again he has a brief whispered conference with the chief clerk; then he turns to the lady in black, and says, "You can take her, madam." Addressing Baby Bronzeboots, he tries to give an austere and even menacing tone to his voice; but in the end there is much more of pity than of anger in the words in which he bids Baby go away, and warns her that this is her last chance.

She is discharged. The magistrate bows with grave courtesy to the lady in black, who as gravely returns the salutation. She passes from the reporters' table to the dock, gently lays her hand on Baby's arm, and leads her out of the Court. A strange change has meanwhile come over the girl in the wonderful hat. Big tears are rolling down her grubby, ruddled cheeks, and she begins to sob so passionately that a kindly usher hastens to give her a glass of water. Luckily she has no hysterical fit, and in a minute or so she follows the lady from the Court.

The fusty-smelling rabble that crowd the corridors know Miss Glyde well, and they make a lane for her and Baby to go out into the street. Poor creature! poor creature! Will Miss Glyde be able to do anything with this most, most miserable waif, you wonder?

You lose your appetite somehow for the night charges when Baby Bronzeboots and her protectress have made their exit. The cases which succeed bear an ugly and nauseating resemblance to each other; and the magistrate, in doling out various doses of fines, or of short terms of imprisonment, seems to be heartily sick of the wretched riff-raff with whom he is constrained to deal; and when the last drunk-and-disorderly has been sent to Holloway for a month, the magisterial countenance wears an expression of considerable relief. Change is always acceptable; and when the ordinary business of the day begins, a decided change is apparent in the proceedings at Great Grubby Street; although the magistrate and his subordinates are quite familiar with the class of cases, one of which is now to be heard.

Catherine Knobstick, a very big, athletic woman with a red face, and a pair of hands which, in a clenched attitude, you would certainly not like to come in contact with your countenance, is charged with violently assaulting Miss Dorothy Trimmer, head-mistress of the Lirriper Lane Board School. The schoolmistress, a little bit of a lady, very tightly laced, and so thin that you can almost see through her, so to speak, had occasion, it appears, one day last week to administer four stripes on

the hand with a small cane to Sarah Ann, aged eleven, daughter of Mrs. Knobstick aforesaid. The little girl, on her return home, up three pair of stairs in Bad-Egg Court, complained to her mother of the chastisement which she had received; and at four o'clock in the afternoon Mrs. Knobstick went down to the Board School, and, after firing several broadsides of unreportable language at the head of the schoolmistress, fell upon her, tooth and nail; tore out her hair by handfuls; pummelled and kicked her, and otherwise maltreated her; expressing at the same time a lively desire to throw a kettle of boiling water over Miss Trimmer, and to tear out her heart-strings, and use them as stay-laces.

This evidence is confirmed by Miss Chapone, Miss Barbauld, and Mrs. Hannah More, assistant teachers; and the case, in which Mr. Crafton Foxifum appears for the School Board authorities. Having been brought to this stage, Mrs. Knobstick is asked what she has to say for herself. She, too, has obtained legal assistance. Mr. Weasel Wideawake undertakes her defence, and a terrible tale he has to unfold. According to his showing, and the evidence which Mrs. Knobstick and her daughter give, Sarah Ann was beaten black and blue by the School Board mistress, and the hands of the maltreated child were swollen — so, at least, Mrs. Knobstick declares — “as big as pumpkins.” No medical testimony, however, is brought forward to show that Sarah Ann suffered anything whatsoever, beyond a slight sting when the cane was applied in moderation

to her palms. In the end the magistrate fines Mrs. Knobstick forty shillings and costs, telling her at the same time that had it not been for the kindly intercession of Miss Dorothy Trimmer, he would assuredly have sent her to gaol for a month. Mrs. Knobstick pays the fine triumphantly, but seems so very near making a rush at the schoolmistress, that she has to be dexterously hustled out of Court by two stalwart constables.

Your neighbour, with whom you have become quite confidential by this time, whispers to you that he knows Bad-Egg Court and Mrs. Knobstick very well indeed. They are a "rum" lot there, he informs you; and Sunday morning is their favourite time for having an all-round rough-and-tumble fight, in which Mrs. Knobstick, who is popularly known as "Brimstone Kitty," rarely fails to distinguish herself. She is noted for her propensity for trying to bite off the noses of her antagonists; and the skill with which she contrives to cut open the skull of an enemy with a washhand-jug is something wonderful. This exemplary virago, the wife of John Knobstick, a diminutive and timid journeyman tailor, is the mother of seven, ranging in years between sixteen and six; all of whom she impartially, not to say ferociously, thrashes with varied articles or implements of chastisement, including a walking stick, the buckle end of a strap, a knotted rope, and a poker. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children have already had frequent occasions to take notice of Mrs. Knobstick's far from peculiar notions of domestic

discipline; and it is usually, so your neighbour tells you, the parents who treat their children most barbarously who are always the most scandalised and the most indignant if their offspring are slightly corrected at school.

A very different type of husband from the diminutive and timorous tailor Knobstick is Mr. Bill Bludgeon, who has already been incidentally mentioned. Mr. Bludgeon is by profession a bricklayer's labourer. He is six feet high, and when he is sober is decently behaved enough towards his wife and five children; but when he has consumed an exceptionally immoderate quantity of beer, capped by potations of "short," that is to say, ardent spirits, Mr. Bludgeon becomes for the moment a wild beast, and is given to battering and bruising his wife, and on occasion to jumping on her, even to the fracturing of her ribs. The great hulking brute who, even after thirty-four hours' incarceration, seems to be still in an imperfect condition of sobriety, looks—blear-eyed, dishevelled, unwashed, and unshaven as he is—sufficiently loathsome and revolting; and when his wretched wife, trembling and tearful, and with a baby in her arms, tells her lamentable tale to the magistrate, she ever and anon glances—with eyes that still have love in them—at the ruffian who has almost pounded her to a mummy.

When he is called upon for his defence, the fellow can only shamle about in the dock, squeezing his felt wideawake between his big hands, and, hanging his shock head sheepishly, mumble out that it was "the

drink that done it, and that he wur very fond of Mary, he wur." "Fond enough of her," drily says the magistrate, "to bruise and batter Mary to death. You are a disgrace to humanity. Prisoner, you deserve to be sent to prison for six months with hard labour. What's the man's character, Inspector?" The officer of police replies that when Bludgeon is sober, he is a steady, hard-working fellow enough; but he adds, significantly, that when the drink is in him, the devil is in him too, and comes out of him, as it did with those who came out from the tombs of old, exceeding fierce. His wife, further interrogated, says that he brings her home his wages punctually; is often, for weeks together, dead sober, and is kind to his children; and then she whimperingly intercedes for mercy to be extended to her brutal husband. "Three months' hard labour," says the magistrate. "Me and the children will have to go to the workhouse," sobs the wife. "Three months' hard labour," repeats Mr. Rhadamanthus Roe sternly. "Do you want a separation order?" he adds. "No," answers the poor beaten soul firmly. "Bill's very good to me when he ain't on the drink." Depend upon it, the patient, trusting, despairing creature will be waiting at the prison gate on the morning when her husband's time is up.

At half-past eleven the case of your coachman and his larcenous wife comes on, and occupies but a quarter of an hour in the hearing. The man is discharged without a stain on his character, as Mr. Weasel Wideawake predicted. The woman is committed for

trial ; and that righteous consummation having been arrived at, you hurry out from the pestiferous tribunal, earnestly hoping that a very long time will elapse before you set eyes upon Great Grubby Street and its police-court again.

THREE P.M. : A CHARITY BAZAAR

EVERYBODY in smart society knows Monty Piffle ; but there are very few people, I should say, who can form any definite idea as to that justly popular gentleman's means of subsistence ; and, perhaps, were the question put point blank to Monty Piffle himself, he would have some difficulty in giving an entirely satisfactory reply. It is understood that he is very highly connected ; but you cannot eat, drink, and be merry, dress faultlessly, and keep a man-servant and a brougham, on a pedigree and nothing else. They say, too, that Monty was formerly in the Hussars ; but the fact of your having formerly worn Her Majesty's uniform, does not necessarily imply that you have an income now that you no longer enjoy the splendid pay and perquisites bestowed on a subaltern in the British cavalry.

The very best people in London are continually sending for Monty Piffle. When the United Growlers Club gave their grand ball and supper to Royalty, on the occasion of the Queen's Jubilee, the committee, only two days before the festival was to take place, discovered that the majority of the members were middle-aged or elderly gentlemen, and that among the

distinguished male guests whom they had invited very few had "any change left," as the saying goes, out of fifty years. What was to be done? How were the five hundred ladies invited to find partners? Forthwith did a modern Curtius leap into the gulf. "Send for Monty Piffle," suggested a wary and resourceful member. "Monty is always to be found at the Junior Chappies' Club. Let him lay on a contingent of fifty eligible mashers, who are each to have a pair of lavender kids sewn with black, a gardenia for the buttonhole, and a guinea for their services as dancers at the ball."

I don't know whether the suggestion of the wary and experienced member was adopted by the committee; but I feel confident that had such a proposition been made to him, he would have risen to it "like a bird." As it is, he has led the Cotillon in at least a dozen great London houses last season. He is unequalled at getting up a picnic; and when Mrs. Diogenes, wife of Mr. Cincinnatus Diogenes, the well-known Conservative M.P., gave her memorable performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, at the Tub, her charming riverside residence at Teddington, Monty was appointed acting-manager, and carried out all the arrangements pertaining to his functions, admirably.

But it is, perhaps, as an organiser of charitable bazaars that this accomplished professor of the art of living handsomely on nothing a year excels himself. His last and most brilliant achievement in this direction has been the grand Chinese Festival and Feast of Lanterns Bazaar, for the benefit of that beneficent

institution, the Hospital for Sick Monkeys, in Gorilla Street, Marmoset Road, N.W. ; and I have just returned from a visit to the bazaar, which cost me exactly three pounds eleven shillings,—the odd shilling being for a penny postage-stamp, which a lady of fashion was so condescending as to moisten with her adorable tongue, and to affix to a rubbishy little envelope. How many stamps she licked during the afternoon it would be impertinent to inquire ; and I hope, indeed, for her health's sake, that she only made believe to apply her delightful lingual organ to the stamp, and that it had already been moistened with a camel's-hair brush dipped in water before she stuck it on the envelope. Still she seemed to have been doing the brisker of businesses throughout the three days the bazaar lasted.

For the remaining three pounds ten shillings I have to show, item, an album photograph portrait of Carmen Sylva ; item, a portrait of Buffalo Bill ; item, a copy beautifully bound in pink calico of Miss Snarleyowe's thrilling romance, *The Heads of the Headless ; or, The Vengeance of Ada the Betrayed* ; item, a model eight-day clock, in pasteboard artistically decorated with gilt foil ; and, finally, a pocket match-box, bearing the enamelled effigy of Ally Sloper, which her Grace the Duchess of Ducksandpeas affably assured me was silver, but which I shrewdly suspect to be electro. However, in any case, it is a blessed thing to have had the honour of being spoken to by a duchess ; and my people at home assure me that I have had a more than ordinarily liberal supply of commodities in exchange for seventy

shillings sterling. Be it as it may, I shall have to live chiefly on haddocks and hard-boiled eggs for a fortnight; and if the collector from the Gaslight and Coke Company, Horseferry Road, calls, he will be informed that I have just started for Jeddo in Japan.

The Chinese Festival and Feast of Lanterns Bazaar was, I am given to understand, a wholly original invention of the most versatile Piffle. As he pointed out to a select committee of lady patronesses, after an elegant luncheon at the Junior Chappies' Club, Park Lane, bazaars of the ordinary kind had been, from the picturesque and spectacular point of view, absolutely done to death. Old English village fairs, Old London fairs; Charles Dickens, Waverley; Spanish, Italian, Arabian Nights; Cavalier and Roundhead, and Hooped Petticoat Bazaars, have all been tried over and over again with varying success. It had once struck him, he added, that a Newgate Calendar Bazaar might prove very interesting; but although many of the ladies declared that they would have no objection to appear in the garb and "make-up" of Jack Sheppard, Dick Turpin, Claude Duval, Captain Macheath, or Sixteen-String Jack, the Duchess of Ducksandpeas asked very pertinently whether any lady who respected herself, would like to become for three days a counterfeit presentment of Maria Manning, Catherine Hayes, or Mother Brownrigg. She admitted that the idea was a splendid one, and that General Sir George Baccus would look Blueskin to the life, while little Lord Teetotum was clearly just the figure for a good Artful

Dodger. Monty adduced Miss Blandy as a handsome female criminal, but nobody knew who Miss Blandy was, and Mr. Piffle's alternative proposal for a Chinese Bazaar was at once unanimously accepted, and the Royal Albert Hall was fixed upon for the holding of the three days' charitable festival.

Here you are, then, at three in the afternoon, at Kensington Gore, and in the midst of all the fun of the fair. It is really a very bright and sparkling spectacle, and reflects, in its entirety, the highest credit on the skill, energy, and artistic taste of its indefatigable promoter. As Monty very practically put it to the committee, china was cheap, and if they ran out of Celestial accessories, they could "decant" with Japan. This appears to have been the case as you take a rapid glance around the enormous amphitheatre.

Mr. Doubletie Brush, the eminent scene-painter, of the Royal Jocosity Theatre, has been engaged to transport a Chinese street bodily into the arena at Kensington; and if the tableau which he has executed be fifty times handsomer and five hundred times cleaner than Hog Lane, Canton, or Vermilion-Pencil Street, Pekin, the scene is at all events sufficiently celestial to please Western eyes. There is a porcelain tower, copied from the engraving of the famous ceramic structure at Nankin; and whether the porcelain tower still exists, or was demolished during the Taë-ping Rebellion, it is nobody's business to inquire. Hester, Marchioness of Doubledup, has opened a photographic studio in the top storey of the tower, where she takes heads at a very

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moderate charge of two guineas and a half each. On the first floor, the Ladies Wilhelmina and Clementina Kincob are dealing extensively in babies' wardrobes. As Lady Clementina is thirty-five, and Lady Wilhelmina has just been celebrating the tenth anniversary of her thirtieth birthday, and both noble demoiselles are unmarried, I should not be surprised to find that some of the purchasers of the infantile garments may find them more of an ornamental than a useful character, and may, on the whole, think that they would have done better had they repaired to Mrs. Washington Moon or Mrs. Adley Bourne for baby outfits.

On the ground floor of the porcelain tower, the Araucanian Ambassadors are selling penny-ices at eighteenpence each. The Earl of Elsewhere has just had one, and proffered half a sovereign in payment. "I should have preferred a whole sovereign, my lord," observed her Excellency. "But my change?" gasped his lordship, who is rather an economical nobleman. "Change!" titters the Araucanian Ambassadors, "there is no such thing as change here, my lord," and the titter is sarcastically re-echoed by Lady Blanche Manger, who is ambling about arrayed as a Chinese pedlar, selling packets of pins for half a crown apiece, and by Miss Chutnee Turmeric, the great millionaire Indian tea-merchant's daughter, who has a stall for dispensing her own papa's product, in charming little two-ounce packages, at the low price of seven and sixpence. Surely Butler was right, when he told us, "that the pleasure is as great, in being cheated, as to cheat."

Apart from the object of the fair Hookypore. He was philanthropic, and consequently andarin, that she was affair, from beginning to end, is an big emerald which he and sprightly swindle. Some of th their stalls with the worn-out that just as there is their own bric-à-brac, for which -selling device is a fancy prices; while others are "mini anecdote that at selling autographs of famous people—Paris, early in authenticity of which, I am afraid, would—is was kept by Mr. Francis Harvey of St. James's Street, lighter other expert in autographs. But one should never too... too closely into the ethics of charitable bazaars. Everything, of course, is done with the view of replenishing the depleted coffers of the Hospital for Sick Monkeys; and if a lady does sell a few dozen of autographs, which no more belong to their reputed writers than they do to the Man in the Moon, who is to blame the fair deceivers? When people used to ask Albert Smith for autographs for a Fancy Fair, he was wont to reply: "By all means. Whose will you have? Shakespeare's, Milton's, Byron's, Shelley's, or Victor Hugo's?" And forthwith he would proceed to scribble as many apocryphal signatures as were demanded from him. Perhaps a good many ruses of a harmless kind have been practised by the autograph vendors of to-day.

Here, however, is a stall heaped high with Chinese commodities and works of art, the genuineness of which is indisputable. Pipes, punch-bowls, teapots, concentric ivory balls, embroidered silks, gongs, flutes, and other musical instruments; models in wax of the hands with

moderate charge of ts, and the "golden lily," or small the first floor, the I weapons of war; pictures on rice-Kincob are dealingtures; mirrors, chess-boards, fans, As Lady Clementin, multitude of miscellaneous objects, has just been celejg from the Flowery Land, form a thirtieth birthday, presided over by three charming married, I shor British aristocracy, two of whom are the purchase, gorgeous costume of Chinese ladies, while more of a no is slightly *embonpoint*, is dressed as a on that, with a long pigtail.

Saucy Sir Lancelot Bucketshop, Bart., who did so very well at Epsom and better at Ascot this year, laughingly asks the lady mandarin whether her pigtail is a real one? Of course it is, replies the lady. How much would she sell it for? How much will Sir Lancelot give? Would five guineas be acceptable? Yes, five guineas will do. The lady mandarin quietly produces a dainty pair of scissors, passes her left hand behind her neck, coils her *queue* round her palm, and snips off the pigtail, apparently at the root. She hands the precious lock to the baronet, and with a charming smile, pockets the five guineas. "Of course, it is not real," she whispers to one of her lady colleagues. If my information be correct, this truly business-like lady mandarin has sold her pigtail on each of the days the bazaar has been open. Only, she watched cautiously for her customers, and waited patiently for her opportunity. For example, pigtail number one was purchased by the Hon. Hiram Chaw, tobacco-planter of Petersburg, Virginia, U.S.A., and pigtail number two became the property of the

Maharajah Rumjum Jellybag, of Hookypore. He was so enraptured with the lady mandarin, that she was nearly wheedling him out of the big emerald which he wore on his right forefinger.

It may be whispered, however, that just as there is nothing new under the sun, the hair-selling device is a very old one. There is a well-known anecdote that at a charitable fair held at Frascati's, in Paris, early in the reign of Louis Philippe, one of the stalls was kept by the beautiful Lady Harriette D'Orsay, the daughter of Lord Blessington, and wife of the famous dandy, Count Alfred D'Orsay. Ladies then wore their hair in what was called the "Blenheim Spaniel" style; that is to say, in a thick cluster of short ringlets on each side of the head—a mode introduced in England by a charming lyric songstress, named Anna Thillon, who sent not only Paris, but London, half crazy by her ravishing performance of the part of the Queen, in the opera of the *Crown Diamonds*.

Among the visitors to the bazaar was the ill-fated Duke of Orleans, the father of the Count of Paris, so well known in "up-to-date" society. The Duke indulged in a brisk flirtation with Lady Harriette, and professed the most passionate admiration for one of her ringlets. "Would you like to buy one?" asked the captivating dame. The Duke replied that he would be enraptured to possess such a treasure. Would he give five thousand francs for it? Gladly. Lady Harriette D'Orsay coolly cut off a whole bunch of her Blenheim Spaniel coiffure, and handed it to the Duke, who, having parted with the stipulated sum, pocketed his treasure

and walked away—not looking, however, for the moment, the happiest of mankind.

Where's the harm? At the Chinese Festival to-day winsome little Mrs. Hernley Hunter sold one of her shoes for three guineas. She had been selling shoes all day. Lady Boblink, who is as tall as a maypole and as beautiful as a gazelle, has been earning many pounds sterling by biting off the tips of cigars, which I should say came rather from Hamburg, or from Houndsditch, than from Havana. Another lady, who has a dainty little pavilion to herself, has done very well by charging half a guinea a head for permission to see through an unperforated brick. The *modus operandi* is of the very simplest description. The victim, when he is admitted into the pavilion, is requested to fix his eyes on one end of a brick, then, will he be so kind as to lift his orbs of vision? He looks straight in front of him, and sees the other end of the brick reflected in a mirror. Consequently, he has seen through the brick. Where, again I ask, is the harm? All the coquettish touting and cozening, the extortion and imposture, and glaringly illegal fortune-telling—for which wretched gipsy women, not in society, are sent to gaol with hard labour,—all the fibbing and gambling, and downright highway robbery, are done in the sacred name of Charity; and let us hope that the Hospital for Sick Monkeys, including the worthy secretary, Mr. Frisky Pocketum, will flourish like the greenest of bay trees through the philanthropic exertions of Mr. Monty Piffle and the lady patronesses of the grand Chinese Festival and Feast of Lanterns Bazaar.

NOON: A PICTURE SALE AT CHRISTIE'S

"A GREAT picture sale is a sight worth seeing," observes Mr. Henry B. Wheatley, F.S.A., in his revised and expanded edition of Peter Cunningham's *Handbook of London*, and in a brief notice of the historic auction room of Messrs. Christie, Manson, and Woods. I should rather think that a great picture sale *is* a sight worth seeing ; and I am about to try whether I cannot conjure up a word-picture of the spectacle in question. The day is Saturday, and the time is high noon. Let us hail yonder hansom, jump into it, and bid the "gondolier of London" drive us to King Street, St. James's. There is a very grand sale of paintings, by the Old Masters, advertised to take place to-day. It is none other, indeed, than the magnificent collection formed by the late Earl of Nineveh, which has been removed from the palatial mansion of the deceased nobleman, in Babylon Gardens, S.W.

We all remember the Earl of Nineveh ; his almost boundless wealth ; his kind, sympathetic, generous nature ; his whims, oddities, caprices, and delusions. He was the son and heir, you will recollect, of the even more eccentric Viscount Sennacherib, statesman, diplo-

matist, connoisseur, and wit, who might have been Prime Minister of England if his head had only been screwed on the right way. He had an astonishing habit of thinking aloud; and there is a story told of him, that riding home once in his chariot with a noble friend, whom he had picked up on the way, he remarked, quite audibly, to himself: "I suppose this old fool expects me to ask him to dinner." When they arrived at Sennacherib House, his lordship did invite his companion to take pot-luck with him; whereupon his brother peer replied: "That he was not such an old fool as to stay, and that one old fool was quite enough at a dinner of only two covers."

But there was one department of culture in which Lord Sennacherib's head was decidedly screwed on as right as a trivet. His knowledge of art was extensive and refined; and he formed the nucleus of the splendid gallery which was afterwards completed by his son, who was promoted in the peerage by the style and title of Earl of Nineveh, Viscount Sennacherib of Silkstone, and Baron Wallsend, of Black Diamond Park, near Scuttlesbury, Durham, and Babylon Gardens as aforesaid. You have been sensible enough to purchase a catalogue of the Nineveh pictures; and so you will be permitted to enter Christie's famous saloons; but you would have acted even more wisely had you come at eleven, instead of twelve. The crush is tremendous. Not only everybody who is in London is here, but a great many people who are not in London appear to be present; that is to say, great nobles and heads of county

families, who have left town at the end of the season, have returned for a few hours to the Metropolis from their country seats, or from the seaside, to behold, if not to bid for, the pictorial treasures which are this day to be dispersed under the implacable hammer of Mr. Woods. Here they all are : representatives of the bluest blood in England ; headed by a Royal duke, a quiet gentleman of military aspect, with a neatly-trimmed moustache and slightly bald ; bishops, dignified clergymen, art critics, journalists, and, of course, dealers in works of art, galore.

Close to you, for example, in the last-named section of visitors to Christie's is Mr. Leopold Lamb, M.P., whose colossal operations as a picture-dealer do not preclude him from sitting for a Lancashire constituency. Near him is a stout, sleek, pudgy little gentleman, with a very shiny bell-topper hat, a cravat of brilliant hue, a gold watch-chain as thick, in degree, as a cable, and many diamond rings flashing on his fat fingers. He is a dark gentleman ; his complexion is a rich olive ; his black whiskers are luxuriant, and his hair inclines more to form into ringlets than to be straight. That is the well-known professional virtuoso, Mr. Nicanor Maccabeus, of Old Bond Street. There are a good many non-professional members of a Historic Race in the room ; but they are come hither to see the sight, strictly as amateurs. If they purpose to buy any pictures, they will not bid themselves ; their commissions for so doing have long since been given to Mr. Leopold Lamb, or to Mr. Nicanor Maccabeus.

You edge your way into the great room which is hung all around with the Nineveh pictures; but the throng is so thick that you have but a distant view of the auctioneer's rostrum, and the easel on which the paintings will, one after the other, be placed by the employés of the firm, and submitted to public competition. It is very hot; but you are so wedged in by humanity, that even if you wished to quit the sale-room—and you have assuredly no inclination to do so—you would experience considerable difficulty in getting into King Street again. Somehow or another, while this strictly "up-to-date" audience are gossiping around you, there arises in your mind the picture of another Christie's, differing from the present one only in its site, and in the costumes of its visitors, as it appeared on the occasion of another great picture sale long, long ago.

That time is a summer noon in the year 1808. The place is not King Street, St. James's, but Pall Mall. The spacious, lofty room draped with paper of a bluish-grey tint, and lighted from the top, is hung with pictures, large and small, by the Old Masters, and the ladies and gentlemen who gather round Mr. Christie's pulpit are clad in garments which to you appear very quaint and curious. There are officers in full scarlet regimentals, with huge cocked hats, decorated with tall plumes, who are flirting with ladies whose waists are just under their armpits, and whose head-dresses are either green jockey caps, or pink gauze turbans, adorned with birds of paradise. There are bishops, too, in 1808, as there are in 1892, but the Right Rev. members of the Episcopal

Bench wear three-cornered hats and voluminous wigs, like birds' nests, plentifully powdered. There are county gentlemen in driving coats of many capes, such as the old hackney coachmen used to wear; and tearing young dandies in pea-green coatees, buckskins, and topboots. "Yes," a voice by your side observes with a slight chuckle, "that's quite a faithful picture of the Christie's which I drew long, long ago." You turn in some slight astonishment. How on earth did the speaker know anything about the impression which was passing through your mind? and if he did paint the picture in question, he must be at least, you think, a hundred years old. Instead of a white-headed centenarian, you behold a buxom, middle-aged gentleman, with mutton-chop whiskers, powdered hair, dressed in a sky-blue coat, a white-and-pink striped nankeen waistcoat, stockinet pantaloons, and Hessian boots.

"My name is Rowlandson," says the middle-aged gentleman, with a polite bow. "You have heard of me, no doubt. Rowlandson, the caricaturist. I etched and aquatinted that picture of Christie's for my friend, Rudolf Ackermann, the publisher in the Strand, for his great work, *The Microcosm of London*." "Yes," adds another voice, with a slight foreign accent, "that is quite true, Mistare Rowlandson, but I draw the architecture of all de building, and all de room in ze *Microcosm*." You perceive close to you a thin figure, something like Voltaire in mien, with scrupulously-curled locks, and a pigtail, a maroon-coloured coat, sea-green small clothes, white stockings, and wearing buckles

on his shoes. He bows even more politely than Mr. Rowlandson had done, and informs you that his name is Pugin, that he is a French *émigré*, and that he had a son who became very famous by his achievements in the revival of Gothic architecture in this country, and a grandson, who was also a distinguished architect, but who was also even more remarkable from his hostility to the late Mr. John Rogers Herbert, R.A.

There is not the slightest use in your rubbing your eyes, and asking yourself whether you are asleep or awake, or whether Chaos has come again. The sale is in full swing ; the biddings for each masterpiece of art succeed one another with magical rapidity ; and the bids, mind you, are not rising by pounds at a time, perhaps to a hundred, but by fives, and tens, and fifties to thousands of guineas. You are a bit of a linguist, more by accident than by inclination ; thus you can understand the remarks of a spectator behind you, when a sumptuous painting of the Grand Canal at Venice is knocked down for two thousand five hundred guineas. "*Corpo di Bacco !*" exclaims in Italian, with a decided Venetian accent, the voice behind you. "Two thousand five hundred guineas for that picture of Canaletto ! Why, I sold it to Signor Smith, the English Consul at Venice, when I was a scene-painter at the Fenice Theatre, for fifty ducats. That would be about forty pounds sterling. For years Signor Smith bought my pictures ; but his usual price was ten ducats, and I am told that he made a good deal of money by selling my canvases to the rich English travellers who visited

Venice." But how can that be, you ask yourself in sore perturbation? The wonderful painter of outdoor Venetian life—he scarcely ever ventured on portraying an interior,—Antonio da Canal, otherwise called Canaletto, died in 1768. Is Sir Frederick Leighton's picture in this year's Academy to be more than realised? Is the land as well as the sea giving up its dead?

Vain to inquire. Still the bidding goes on; the aristocratic crowd surge from side to side, stare, cough, and titter. Now and again, when some exceptionally renowned masterpiece makes its appearance on the easel, or some almost unprecedented price is reached, thunders of applause resound through Christie's spacious halls. A kind of mental vertigo comes over you. Mirage succeeds mirage in your mind; and, upon my word, so many and so strange are the scenes presented to you, that if an individual clad in Oriental garb were suddenly to inform you that he was Timour the Tartar, while another, in a shining helmet, and bearing a richly embossed shield, were to hand you his card, and tell you that his name was Achilles, and that he had once the pleasure of meeting you at the Camp before Troy, you would only be able to shrug your shoulders despairingly and opine that Chaos really had come, and that you were in the very midst of it.

Hark! what is that old gentleman grumbling about, who is striving to force his way through the crush to the rostrum. A grey, grizzled, wrinkled, ragged-moustached man in desperately shabby clothes, and altogether with a sadly poverty-stricken, not to say insolvent,

aspect. His black cloak, doublet, and breeches of late seventeenth-century fashion, are all patched and frayed. He wears a battered, slouched hat, and black worsted stockings, almost past darning. "Yes," he cries to you in Dutch, as though he was an old acquaintance—he is, in the spirit, a *very* old one—"I *am* bankrupt, I *am* insolvent, I *am* next door to a pauper. I had wealth once ; but at least I spent my riches in no unworthy manner. I laid out thousands upon thousands of guilders, just as your own Sir Thomas Lawrence did, in buying pictures and drawings by the Old Masters. But crack ! A war between Holland and England broke out. I was suddenly called upon to settle the accounts of the patrimony of my son, by my first wife. I had to sell my Old Masters, and my own paintings too. There was no money in Holland, not a stiver ; all owing to the accursed war. The sale brought a wretched result, and I was ruined. Now the auctioneer has just sold one of my finest pictures for only fifteen hundred pounds ; it should have fetched four thousand. It shall. I was not always the ragged old beggar man you see. Look at my portrait of myself in the Dresden Gallery. Handsome, jovial, gaily clad, waving aloft a beaker of wine, with my bonny wife in silks and satins on my knee. Englishman, I am Rembrandt Geretz Van Rhyn."

Surely, this must be a shadowy land, where all things wear an aspect not their own ; for just as you strive to catch the eye of the poor broken-down old Dutchman, in order to ask him to call on you and look at a rare etching from his needle, which you recently bought, a

bargain, at Brighton, he turns into the Earl of Rosebery, who is amicably chatting with the Right Hon. Henry Chaplin. Then again, the Spanish cavalier, with the plumed hat, who has been introduced to you as Don Esteban Murillo, by a Roman ecclesiastic whom you know to be Fra Angelico, turns into Mr. Humphry Ward, of *The Times*; and Fra Angelico—in the guise of Mr. Frank Burnand—asks you to dinner next Thursday at the Garrick Club. Nicolas Poussin, Claude Lorraine, Jan Steen, and “Bill” Hogarth—dear old “Bill” Hogarth—will be there, and the evening will be a right merry one. I believe you, my Burnand! but why should Mr. B. suddenly inform you—with a long beard, and in a spreading velvet cap—that his real name is Lionardo da Vinci, and that he is bound for France to die in the arms of King Francis I.?

Mr. Woods has just sold, amidst volleys of cheers, an Adrian Ostade for three thousand five hundred pounds, when a sudden silence comes over the brilliant assemblage. The crowd part; they make a lane, a wide gangway; and, from the door right up to the rostrum, there paces slowly and gently one of the most beautiful young men you ever saw. He is clad in mediæval doublet and hose of black damask, and there is a great gold chain about his neck. He may be about thirty years of age; his long and silky hair flows over his shoulders; his eyes are modestly cast down, but when he raises them you see they are large and dark, and almond-shaped, and full of inexpressible tenderness. When he smiles, the smile is that of an angel.

The Royal Duke steps forward and presses his hand; and then the puissant figure of an ancient man, hoary, majestic, and reverend, arrayed in purple and gold, forces his way through the throng, and casts his arms around the beautiful youth. "This will be a grand day for thee, my son," he murmurs; "thou shalt have thy reward among these English. At least they can appreciate thy divine genius—and mine. In life I girded at thee sometimes, and it may be was just a trifle jealous of thee; but there is no envy, there is no hatred, no malice yonder, in the bright Fields where we live for ever with Apelles, and Zeuxis, and Phidias, and the rest of the Great Company eternally bound together by the links of the love of Art—that Art, of which we were the glories." Strange to say, the figure of the old man eloquent is all at once transformed into that of Prince Soltykoff, who straightway invites the comely young stranger to come and visit him at Newmarket.

Who can the handsome Italian young gentleman be, you wonder? But first, you are anxious to ascertain the identity of the hoary old gentleman in the vest of cloth of gold, and the purple velvet doublet. You ask Mynheer Albert Cuyp, cattle-painter—who, by the way, an instant ago, was Mr. H. B. Davis, R.A., and who, in another moment, will become Mr. Ashby Sterry, art critic and "Laureate of the Frills"—Who is he? Who can he be, but Michel Angelo Buonarrotti? The beautiful young man halts before the easel, on which there is a painting of the Crucifixion. "That is my work," he says. "Of that there can be no doubt, albeit it is a

juvenile and somewhat crude performance." He gently falls back into the Infinities; the bidding for the picture of the Crucifixion begins; and, after a prolonged and almost frenzied struggle, it is knocked down for ten thousand six hundred guineas to a gentleman with a German name. Not one penny too much for an undoubted work from the immortal hand of Raffaele Sanzio.

As the memorable assemblage breaks up you rush forward to try to touch even the hem of the garment of the illustrious painter of the Crucifixion and the Transfiguration; but he eludes you, and you can only see him step into his brougham, in which awaits him a handsome, dark, matronly dame, whom you at once recognise as the Fornarina. "How well the Marquis is looking to-day, and the Marchioness too," remarks Mr. Ashby Sterry. "The Marquis of what?" you ask, impatiently. "Why, the Marquis of Asparagus to be sure, and his lovely young Marchioness." Then you remember how many hundred years ago it was that the beautiful young man died in the noontide of his fame, and that only six months ago you read the noble epitaph on his tomb in the Pantheon of Agrippa, at Rome, over against the sepulchre of Victor Emmanuel. Then, as the great gathering at Christie's slowly disperses, there begins to dawn upon you the fact that you have been dreaming a dream, and dwelling among the shadows of departed painters. Still, a picture sale at Christie's is "a sight to see," at all events.

FROM MORN TILL MIDNIGHT: ON A 'BUS

It was the same Mr. Ashby Sterry, I believe, who, with his characteristic modesty, once remarked that he laid no claim to the possession of exceptional erudition, or conspicuous culture ; but that he flattered himself that, in the art of looking out of window on a rainy day, he was an almost unequalled proficient. I am not skilled at looking out of window ; and I consequently envy those who excel in the contemplation of things and people from a casement. I have heard of a gentleman, who resided on that short terrace in front of the sea at West Brighton, near Medina Villas, and 'known as the "Quarter-deck," who was unfortunately deprived of the use of his limbs, and who used to recline in an easy-chair all day long, carefully sighting with a telescope every vessel that passed across his field of vision, and carefully tabulating the apparent tonnage of the passing craft in a book specially kept for the purpose.

I lived for about five years in Victoria Street, up three pair of stairs ; and I had five windows looking on the lengthy thoroughfare in question. I feel persuaded that, during five years' occupancy of my flat, I had not looked out of the window a dozen times.

Let me see. Once roused to enthusiasm by the strains of "The Campbells are coming," or "The Men of Harlech," or "Highland Laddie," I threw up the sash to see the London Scottish march past. I have also occasionally thrust my head out of window to take note of some monster Trades Union procession, trudging along to hold a demonstration in Hyde Park; and a Sunday or two ago, the entire household, SELF included, rushed to the windows to behold the passage of one of the prettiest and most picturesque processions I had ever seen. It was a gathering of Roman Catholic school-children, who were going, so I understood, to visit Archbishop Vaughan, at the Archiepiscopal residence hard by, and to listen to a sermon from a little boy-preacher.

Onward they came in their thousands. Little boys, brave in rosettes; tiny mites of girls in white, smiling under gauze veils; priests in full canonicals; banners, tapers, crosses, waxen images, and three brass bands playing—whatever do you think? Why, melodies from the "Stabat Mater." Yes, the sublime airs of the "Inflamatus," and the "Cujus Animam" were grandly audible; and as I listened to Rossini's immortal music I remembered that nearly half a century ago my mother, who was a Protestant of the Church of England, proposed to give a performance of the "Stabat Mater" at the Castle Hotel, Richmond; and that no sooner had she advertised the concert, than the local clergy preached so fiercely against her, and conscientious persons distributed so many hundreds of handbills

warning Richmond to have nothing to do with Babylon, that the poor gentlewoman was fain, in sheer despair, to give up her enterprise, after losing many pounds, to the immediate detriment of five small boys and girls, who were continually demanding roast mutton.

Thank goodness, there is something like toleration in England nowadays, and I did not hear any cries of "No Popery!" as the thousands of little Catholic school-children, with their flowers, their candles, and their banners, trotted by. Subsequently I looked frequently and attentively out of window. Fortunately, the weather had been so hot, that I have not had much to fear on the score of bronchitis; and as I have had a sharp attack of hay fever, or summer catarrh, without opening the windows at all, I thought that on the principle acted upon by Sydenham, I might cure my cold by throwing open the windows as widely as possible. You will remember that the illustrious physician in question was a martyr to the gout, and after trying ever so many remedies for podagra, he went up one wintry night to the roof of his house, unbandaged his gouty foot, and sat on the tiles in the midst of storm and sleet for two hours. Next day the gout had quite left him. Perhaps the story is not true, and, possibly, it may have been not Sydenham but some other physician who ventured on the hazardous experiment; but I found the anecdote in my commonplace book, just as I have set it down.

When I looked from the window in Victoria Street, and beheld the almost constant succession of omnibuses

and road-cars streaming towards Westminster Abbey, or towards Victoria Station, there came over me a feeling of amazement. Is it not, indeed, surprising, astounding, to behold these clattering *cortéges* of huge arks on wheels, crammed inside and out with passengers, and drawn only by two horses, which do not seem to be in any way inconvenienced by the mighty load they have to draw? Probably you may be of opinion that there is nothing wonderful at all in a 'bus or a road-car. You have grown accustomed to it, even as the cows and sheep have grown accustomed to the sight and the sound of a passing railway train, from which, when Sir Francis Head wrote his *Stokers and Pokers*, dumb animals used to scamper away in affright. But to me omnibuses are a continual subject of astonishment; and, indeed, I am continually wondering at the sights with which I make acquaintance in this, the most wonderful city in the world.

I wonder why cholera, smallpox, and scarlet fever are not permanent pestilences in the horrible slums which continue to rot in some parts of Westminster, and about Soho. I wonder why the people, roused to exasperation by the selfish and stupid locking-up of Lincoln's Inn Fields, do not uproot the railings of a garden which would afford harmless recreation to thousands of children cooped up in narrow courts and alleys, and of years too tender to be able to reach the parks without escort; in fine, to my causes for amazement there is no end; nor will there be till the greatest wonder of all comes, Death; when, perhaps,

we shall find, as good Jeremy Taylor put it, "That it is as easy to die as to be born."

Omnibuses, in particular, excite my surprise chiefly for the reason, that, when I was born, there were no omnibuses in London, at all. The French maintain that the great mathematician, Pascal, was the first inventor of omnibuses, and that his scheme for such a kind of vehicle lay dormant for a hundred and eighty years; when, in 1828, a line of omnibuses was established in the Paris thoroughfares. In the following year the first London omnibus started from Paddington to the Bank, the conveyance being introduced by a Mr. Shillibeer, who was a "funeral postmaster," and whom I knew many years ago. For some time, indeed, omnibuses used to be known as "Shillibeers"; but the abbreviation of "bus" having become more popular than the contraction "shilly," the first term was universally adopted.

Of course, our vivacious neighbours across the Channel declare that Mr. Shillibeer stole the omnibus from France; but I happen to have on my shelves the *Encyclopædia of Illustration* of old Mr. W. H. Pyne; and among the hundreds of groups of figures, animals, and vehicles drawn and aquatinted by that worthy engraver, I find a veritable omnibus with the door at the back, one long quadrant-shaped window at each side, and a box-seat. The conveyance would hold, I should say, about twelve persons, and the plate, please observe, was published in 1813, when we were in the very thick of our last and terrific war with France.

There is another curious circumstance connected with London omnibuses : the attendant, who stands on his perch by the side of the door, helps passengers in and out, takes the fares, and who is generally a very civil and obliging fellow, is known as the "conductor"; but he was originally called the "cad," a name, I should say, borrowed from the Edinburgh "caddie," who was a porter, or messenger, but with the usual Cockney fondness for abbreviations, "caddie" was shortened into "cad."

An omnibus conductor, nowadays, would, I suppose, were the epithet of "cad" applied to him, resent the appellation as a scandalous insult; and, indeed, "cad" has come to be considered a term of contempt, now extended to any mean, vulgar fellow of whatever social rank he may be. The Australians, in particular, are inordinately fond of qualifying persons, whom they do not like, as "cads." If you wear clothes of unaccustomed cut, or decline to accept three invitations to dinner on the same day, or ask for a private room at an hotel in the Bush, you are sure to be called, and will probably be denounced in the local newspaper, as a "cad" of the first water. The drollest thing in connection with this word is that "cad" and "caddie" are both derived from the French word "cadet," meaning a junior member of a family; and can there be anything genteeler at present than a cadet at Woolwich or at Sandhurst?

When I gaze at the passing 'buses, I ask myself a question which has troubled me a good deal during

many years, and to which I have never been able to give, or to obtain, a sufficing answer. We have all heard of omnibus drivers' and conductors' grievances, and the more or less satisfactory readjustment of wages arrived at after the last strike; but still one cannot help thinking that the hours of labour imposed on tramway and omnibus men are, to say the least, harsh, physically injurious to their wellbeing, and contrary to the best interest of their employers. The question of Sunday labour is, perhaps, the most burning one of all, but this particular item should be considered impartially, and with a good deal of circumspection.

I hold it, at the outset, to be simply monstrous that any class of working men, be they skilled or unskilled toilers, should be compelled to work sixteen—or even fourteen—hours a day, seven days a week. If it be a fact that such toil is imposed on omnibus drivers and conductors, I say that the fact is a scandal to this professedly humanitarian age, and a disgrace to the taskmasters of the over-driven drivers, conductors, and horse-keepers. What time have these maltreated thralls, condemned to a worse than Egyptian bondage, to go to church or chapel; to improve their minds by reading; to partake of a little cheerful recreation; and to enjoy the society of their wives and children?

As things stand at present with the hackney carriage folk, it seems to me to be a case of work, work, work—unflagging labour, incessant slavery from early morning till late at night, from the 1st of January to the 31st of December. Of course, I shall be told that these

luckless martyrs to the public convenience, or rather of corporate selfishness and public indifference to the interests of men who serve that public so loyally and uncomplainingly, have certain fixed holidays allowed them in the course of the year, or are allowed an occasional "day off" from their grievous servitude. Otherwise, it seems next door to the incredible that there should be in London some sixteen thousand men, intelligent, able-bodied, and capable, willing for very moderate wages to work sixteen hours a day, every day, with no interval for Sabbath rest; and when I mention sixteen hours of daily drudgery, I am bound to remember that, in all probability, the sixteen hours often practically mean eighteen.

The driver must be on his box, the conductor on his perch, by eight in the morning at latest, and it must be nearly midnight ere the last omnibus returns to the yard. There are, however, many things to be done before and after the driver takes the reins in hand. The men, I suppose, require some refreshment when their hands are at last really free for a few hours; on the whole, it would be instructive to learn the exact quantity of nightly rest—shall I say enjoyed?—by omnibus drivers and conductors.

To me, who have watched life on a 'bus almost from its beginning, there are few subjects of curious meditation more interesting than the changes which have taken place in the fares charged. At the commencement sixpence was the universal fare from the West to the East end. I can well recollect when what were

called twopenny "busses" were introduced. It was, I think, in 1847; since I remember that in the year in question I drew, in a comic periodical called *The Man in the Moon*, edited by Albert Smith and Angus B. Reach, a little vignette representing a quarrel between an omnibus conductor of the old and expensive school, and another of the new and cheap one. "Come on!" cries the new 'bus man, squaring up at his antagonist. "Come on!" contemptuously echoes the conservative conductor, "d'ye think I'd bemean myself to fight a tupp'ny?"

And, lo! in these days of cheapness, even a twopenny 'bus has come to be thought dear. For a while the penny 'bus that journeyed between the Strand and Waterloo Station was deemed a marvel of cheapness; but now, I am told that you can get from Trafalgar Square to Westminster for a ha'penny. But mark the artfulness of mankind! From Victoria Station to Baker Street the 'bus fare is threepence. Why threepence? Because there is no opposition on the line. I am told by a lady who frequently uses the threepenny route, that the horsing of the 'buses might be much improved, and, on the whole, that the vehicles are accustomed to meander along, in a gentle, but somewhat dawdling manner. The Irish nobleman, who was being carried in a sedan-chair, of which the bottom unfortunately came out, observed, "That but for the dignity of the thing, he might as well have walked"; and my feminine informant holds somewhat analogous opinion touching the threepenny 'buses, with the jaded steeds, that travel between Victoria and Baker Street.

When their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales opened, in 1872, the Bethnal Green Museum of Science and Art, there was hoisted at one point of the line of route a huge placard bearing the inscription, "The Greatest Curiosities in Bethnal Green are Outside the Museum." Similarly, I may remark, that to me the greatest curiosities in the London omnibuses are to be found on the exterior, and not in the interior of these conveyances. The Metropolitan 'bus, as I first knew it, was a very modest vehicle, holding twelve persons inside, and none at all, save the driver, outside. In construction, it did not differ very much from the vehicle I have glanced at, as figuring in old Mr. W. H. Pyne's *Encyclopædia of Illustration*, in 1813. The roof was wholly free from passengers, and years elapsed before there was added to the top of the 'bus two long rows of seats parallel with the sides of the 'bus, and which very soon acquired the popular designation of the "knife-board." No females ever climbed to the "knife-board" eminence; and, indeed, almost the only 'bus with a box seat available for a fair occupant, was the London and Richmond one.

When the London General Omnibus Company—the capital for which was largely subscribed in Paris—began its operations, its promoters held an Exhibition somewhere near Charing Cross, of models of improved omnibuses; and among these I recall several with staircases on the outside, like those attached to the Russian "isbas," and by means of which the "knife-board" could be reached. This eventually led to the adoption of what


is known as the "garden-seat" system, and to me it is positively delightful to watch, looking out of window, the transformation of the formerly barren, or at the most, men-folk frequented roofs of the 'buses, into so many brilliant parterres of tastefully dressed ladies, who gaily ascend the staircases, and seat themselves on the commodious benches, at right angles with the longitudinal sides of the 'bus.

I have fallen hopelessly in love with hundreds of brilliant bonnets, and handsome hats, to say nothing of skirts and sunshades of every colour of the rainbow; and I only regret that the altitude of my apartments precluded me from scanning the countenances of the doubtless lovely occupants of the garden-seats. Perhaps, for the sake of domestic peace and quiet, it is better that I should have admired the costumes, and not become acquainted with the fascinating lineaments of the wearers thereof.

NINE P.M. : AFTER DINNER AT THE HOTEL BROBDINGNAG

"BUT which is David, and which is Goliath," the little boy at the fair is said to have asked the proprietor of the peep-show. "Whichever you like, my little dear; you pays your money and you takes your choice." Similarly, my dear readers, you are quite at liberty to assume that by the Hotel Brobdingnag is meant the Grand, the Métropole, the Victoria, the Westminster Palace, the Grosvenor, the Windsor, the Charing Cross, the Holborn Viaduct, the First Avenue, the Great Northern, the Cannon Street, or the Grand Midland. You have paid your money for this work; and you are entitled to take your choice of one out of the many gigantic and palatial hotels which at present adorn the British Metropolis.

The Hotel Brobdingnag may thus be in Chevy Chase Avenue, W.C.; or in Screech Owl Street, S.W.; or in the Five Fields, Pimlico; or on the Heavy Hill Causeway; or in Saltpetre Street, E.C.; or at the Brill, Somers Town. At all events, it is 9 P.M.; you have been dining at the *table d'hôte* of the Hotel Brobdingnag; and you are now enjoying a mild Havana, and a



cup of excellent coffee in the vestibule of the vast caravansary. This entrance hall is spacious and lofty; and its dome-shaped roof, which is elaborately panelled and carved, is supported by towering columns of—well, one may say malachite while one is about it—with Corinthian capitals richly gilt. The floor is laid in a tasteful pattern of tessellated stone; the doors are of ebony and gold; and the entrances to the avenues leading to the lift, the ladies' drawing-room, and the smoking and billiard room, are hung with costly draperies of crimson plush.

Wherever there is space available for a looking-glass, huge Venetian mirrors in flamboyant frames meet your eye; and round the sides of the vestibule itself are placed roomy settees and arm-chairs upholstered in crimson morocco. Over the centre of the tessellated pavement is laid a splendid Persian carpet; and the great white and black marble fireplace, with its chimney-piece supported by Caryatides, representing mermaids or Tritons—I forget which—is almost as imposing and as ornate as the fireplace from Rubens's house in Antwerp, which—the chimneypiece, not the Flemish city—Lord Rosebery has got in his hall at Mentmore.

The dining-room which you have just quitted is as large as the vestibule, and even more sumptuously furnished. There is one large round table for solitary diners, but the remainder of the guests—there are about a thousand, all told, in the hotel—are accommodated in parties of from two to six at tables of different

sizes. The ceiling is coved, carved, and artistically embellished with arabesques. The walls are panelled with crimson damask; the dado exhibiting a series of florid wood-carvings—or, may be, the dado is of Lincrusta,—the carpet is a three-pile Indian Axminster, and the window curtains are of Henri Deux tapestry.

From the ceiling hangs a colossal chandelier of Venetian glass, the very finest that the historic works at Murano could produce; and, it is almost needless to say, the vast establishment is from cellar to roof illumined by the electric light. In your bedroom, you can turn on and turn off that blessed luminary whenever you like throughout the night; although, of course, there is plenty of gas on hand to meet the contingency of Electra, who is somewhat of a capricious dame, taking it into her head to have a fit of the tantrums and vanishing for a few minutes, without giving you the slightest warning.

Everything in this thoroughly up-to-date caravansary is on a colossal or Brobdingnagian scale. The hall-porter, who wears a semi-military uniform, and a cap with a gold band—surely, he ought to have a cocked hat with feathers for Sundays—is, you will surmise, of Teutonic extraction; and he is tall enough and stalwart enough to have been a drum-major in the Prussian Imperial Guards. His under-porters are likewise sons of Anak; and the servitor, who attends to the perpetually ascending and descending lift, is a bushy-whiskered Englishman, whom you shrewdly suspect of having been one of Barclay and Perkins's draymen, who,

having become slightly weary of beer, has resolved to consume only the lightest claret, which, we all know, is the beverage served out, without stint, to all the employés of the Hotel Brobdingnag.

The lift itself is an octagonal apartment, which will hold at least a dozen inmates ; and as, later on, you take your seat in the chamber in order to ascend to the sixth floor on which your modest but very comfortable bedroom is situated, you remember that thirty years ago there was not such a convenience as a lift at all in any English hotel. Who invented the lift ? The Americans say they did ; but their claim to the invention is baseless. Recent antiquarian discoveries at Rome have proved that there were lifts at the Coliseum for the conveyance of the wild beasts from their subterranean dens to the level of the arena ; and it can be shown that the modern domestic lift is an Italian device, since in the *Greville Memoirs* we read that the agreeable diarist, who told such nice stories about George IV. and William IV., and who was known at Tattersall's as the " Gruncher," saw a lift in a palace at Genoa more than sixty years ago.

The Regent Orleans also made use of a lift for his select supper parties, at which he and his exemplary guests were adverse to servants being present. When the first course had been partaken of, a spring was touched, and the table descended into the regions below, to reappear, in a minute or so, laden with the second course. The Empress Josephine had a similar contrivance at the Tuileries ; her entire toilette descending on a

table, from an apartment above, into the Imperial dressing-room ; and this appliance, so the papers said, was revived in the early days of the Second Empire by the Empress Eugénie.

Being solitary, you made one of about twenty other guests at the huge round table in the centre of the dining saloon, and—well, let me see, what did you have for dinner ? It is unnecessary to specify the items in the bill of fare ; let it suffice to say you had a choice of two soups, a thick and a clear one. There were two fishes and two *entrées* ; a joint ; game or poultry, according to the season, plenty of well-dressed vegetables ; a sweet, an ice, and a varied dessert. Your dinner cost you five shillings and sixpence ; and yet another five shillings you expended in a modest pint of champagne, of a well-known brand ; but had you forsworn the vintage of Epernay you might have had a pint of very palatable claret for eighteenpence.

Forty years ago there were no pints of claret obtainable at any hotel in the United Kingdom ; nay, when I first went to the United States in 1863, there were no pint bottles of claret, and no table napkins, on board the Cunard steamship *Arabia*. The vestibule in which you are enjoying your Havana and your coffee is crowded with ladies and gentlemen, the majority of whom are staying in the hotel ; while many others may be chance diners who have wired during the afternoon for a table to be reserved for them. They are always wiring and telephoning to and from the Hotel Brobdingnag ; it is one of the pulses of the world, and is perpetu-

ally being felt. If you want a box at the opera, or to know the last quotation of Consols, or to ascertain whether the Hon. Octavius Ratley has got in for the Mercantile Division of Smokely-on-Sewer, you can ascertain all that you wish to learn, without stirring outside the Hotel Brobdingnag.

So luxurious are your surroundings that you frequently fail to realise the fact that you are staying at an hotel. You fancy that you are in some gorgeously appointed West-End club, at which ladies as well as gentlemen are present ; and with great inward contentment you perceive that, although none of the ladies are indulging in the Indian weed, not one of them has any complaint to make of the cigars or cigarettes which the gentlemen are so assiduously puffing. There are, of course, in the Hotel Brobdingnag spacious smoking and billiard rooms for the male guests, and drawing-rooms for the ladies, to say nothing of reading-rooms available for both sexes ; and to the drawing-rooms, evidently, those ladies will repair who cannot endure the odour of tobacco. Others who do not mind, and even enjoy the aroma of the weed, and who prefer to enjoy the society of their husbands or brothers, while those individuals are taking their after-dinner smoke, grace the settees of the vestibule with their presence ; and most cheerful and charming they look under the circumstances. A great many of the ladies and gentlemen are in full evening dress ; and by half-past nine large numbers of the visitors will depart in broughams or hansoms, or four-wheelers, for the Royal Italian Opera, or the Lyceum,

the Lyric, or the Gaiety; but always remember that low-necked dresses for ladies, or sable garb and white chokers for gentlemen, are not insisted upon in the vestibule after dinner at the Hotel Brobdingnag.

You may dress as you please—in fact, in nine hundred and ninety-nine items out of the thousand, the Hotel Brobdingnag is Liberty Hall. There is only one restrictive law, and that is one of the Medes and Persians. You are expected, while you are in the hotel, to behave yourself properly.

It is only when you descend from the vestibule, a few marble steps into the outer hall, that you arrive at last at the conviction that it is really an hotel that you are domiciled in. Then you see an almost continuous stream of vehicles, heavily laden with luggage, driving up to the hotel; then you see the occupants of the vehicles entering the hotel to inquire at the office what rooms they can have; and then, when they have made their arrangements, you see the luggage swiftly seized upon by brawny porters, and made to disappear with almost magical rapidity. It is spirited away, you know not how, and in some way or another conveyed along a subterranean tunnel to the luggage lift; and when the guests' lift takes you up to your sky-parlour on the sixth floor, you will find all your belongings, neatly unstrapped, awaiting you.

I have made this rapid sketch of a modern Grand Hotel for a very definite, and, it may be, slightly useful purpose. To you young or middle-aged, but always highly-prized readers of mine, there will be possibly very

little matter for astonishment in the Grand Hotel to which you so blithely resort. You would consider it quite an outrage if you were unable to find hotels of the character which I have briefly delineated, not only in London, but in all the provincial cities, and in Edinburgh and Dublin.

If you go to the sea-side you find palatial hotels at Brighton and St. Leonard's, at Eastbourne and Folkestone and Bournemouth. When you go abroad for your autumnal trip you travel from one Brobdingnagian hotel to another; from Paris to Rome; or Brussels to Vienna and Buda Pesth. Will you allow me to tell you that I can remember the time when there were no Hotel Brobdingnags in England, and very few on the Continent? Forty years since, the very best hotels in Europe were to be found in Switzerland; and the excellent managements of these establishments and the moderation of their charges led Albert Smith, the most adventurous, the most indefatigable and the thriftiest of tourists, to uplift his voice against the costly, uncomfortable, and ill-managed hotels of his own country. I grant, that at the period in question the nobility and gentry could be adequately accommodated at such hotels as Mivart's; as the Clarendon, in Old Bond Street; at Long's in the same thoroughfare; and at Thomas's, under the colonnade of Her Majesty's Theatre.

The Golden Cross, Charing Cross, was also a very commodious inn; but none of these hostelries could properly be called Grand Hotels of the Brobdingnagian pattern. There were a few family hotels in Jermyn

Street and at Albemarle Street; still, save in the way of prices, they were the reverse of Grand. In the provinces you could get good cheer and warm shelter at the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, and the Hen and Chickens, Birmingham. For the rest, the vast majority of English hotels, twoscore years ago, were of the kind described in the *Pickwick Papers*.

Let me just sum up a few of the characteristics of the hotels of the past. Fourpost beds, very comfortable, no doubt, in winter, but horribly stuffy in summer. Rarely an easy-chair, and never a writing-table in your bedroom. A dark coffee room, into which no lady was ever permitted to enter; and no public room for ladies at all. When you travelled with your wife, your sisters, or your daughters, you were obliged to have a private room; the first charge in connection with which being three shillings and sixpence for a pair of wax candles, generally brought up in battered, plated candlesticks. In hotels of the very first rank, real silver made its appearance on the table; in those of the second rank, the forks and spoons were inferior Sheffield ware; in those of the third rank, the forks were steel, and often with only three prongs. If you asked for a bottle of claret, you had to pay eleven shillings for a mysterious vintage heavily laden with loaded hermitage; and a bottle of this stuff sufficed to make you tipsy. Most of the champagne was either gooseberry or rhubarb, and its price was from twelve to fifteen shillings a bottle.

For dinner you could only get some vile gravy or mock-turtle soup; then came, occasionally, boiled salmon

or fried soles, and then usually a joint or a badly-roasted fowl. The vegetables were swimming in water ; and the only sauces known were tomato, parsley-and-butter, egg, oyster, and melted butter. Your repast closed with strong-tasting cheese, celery, and apple tart or cabinet pudding. There were no *entrées*, save haricot-mutton, Irish-stew, veal cutlets and bacon, and lamb's fry. For breakfast, fresh fish was scarcely ever served ; you had to be content with bloaters, eggs-and-bacon, sausages, or cold meat. If you ventured to smoke in your private room, the people of the house protested. Finally, although there was no fixed charge for attendance, you were beset when you left the hotel by a horde of menials, each and all of whom expected "bakshish." You had to fee waiters, chamber-maids, boots, and ostlers.

This was the English hotel of the past. Albert Smith tried to reform it, and wrote a pamphlet entitled *The Great Hotel Nuisance*. About 1855 my master-in-letters, Charles Dickens, was staying in Paris ; and I was living at an hotel in the Quartier Latin. Comparatively young, as I then was, I had travelled a good deal on the Continent of Europe, and was tolerably familiar with most of the best hotels abroad. Dickens proposed that I should write a series of papers in *Household Words*, in amicable reply to Albert Smith, and to this series we gave the title of "The Great Hotel Question." Understand that, at this time, the only Grand Hôtel in Paris was the Louvre, which accommodated about six hundred guests. To this succeeded the Grand Hôtel on the Boulevard des Capucines, with seven hundred rooms ;

the other leading hotels of Paris were the Hôtel Bristol, in the Place Vendôme, and Meurice's, in the Rue de Rivoli, then, as now, the favourite resort of English and American travellers.

Dickens, although a Radical in politics, was curiously Conservative in many social matters, and he was rather opposed than favourable to Grand Hotels; but I sided entirely with Albert Smith, and when I returned in 1856 to London, I drew up a prospectus of a Grand Hotel Company, which prospectus I submitted to Peter Morrison, then the proprietor of the Bank of Deposit, and who was reputed to be a man of vast wealth. But poor Peter soon afterwards came to signal financial grief; and I could not persuade any "parties in the city" with whom I was acquainted to take up my hotel project. You see that those were the days of Joint Stock Companies, and the Act authorising the formation of Companies with Limited Liability had not yet been passed. When that measure did become the law of the land, Grand Hotels in England sprang one after the other into existence, fully armed and equipped like Minerva from the head of Jove, and have been increasing and flourishing ever since.

FIVE P.M. : A CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE

I SUPPOSE that the myriads of little folk scattered throughout the great House of Glass at Sydenham, and in the gardens thereof, have been here since early in the forenoon ; but it was five o'clock ere we could get away from work, and enjoy one of the most delightful drives of which I am aware—that from London, through Brixton and Dulwich, to Norwood. Apparently, some hundreds—it may be thousands—of boys and girls have just finished some grand musical performance ; since we watch them streaming down the degrees of the great orchestra ; and in another part of the palace there is a gymnastic contest going on, the view of which, however, to a late comer, is barred by serried ranks of anxious, yet delighted, fathers and mothers, who are watching the exploits in calisthenics of their small offspring.

Now and again you catch a glimpse of a youth in cricketing flannels, or of a tiny maiden in a blouse and knickerbockers, performing some athletic feat, which, so far as I am concerned, I am perfectly certain I was never able to do. But I am delighted to see that

gymnastic, and almost acrobatic, training is making so much headway in the education of girls.

Such training will conduce towards making them healthy and strong; and as I have always been a fervent advocate of woman's rights, it strikes me that, during the next generation or so, what remaining rights women have to secure, will be much more easily obtained, if the women themselves have not only the mind but also the muscle wherewith to demand justice. It will not be easy to trample on the sex when they have become physically strong enough to take you by the scruff of the neck if you argue with them, or give you "one in the eye" if you refuse them the Parliamentary franchise.

It is a sight, and a most exhilarating one, to see these troops of children, from little dots of four and five in sun-bonnets, to big girls of twelve and fourteen with their hair down their backs, or twisted into those pig-tails which were fashionable when Charles Dickens was writing *Pickwick* more than fifty years ago, and which—as is the case with most fashions—have recently come into vogue again. It was as delightful to contemplate the merry, round-faced, chubby boys, the smaller ones in those knickerbockers, the origin of which, as an article of small boys' wear, has yet to be cleared up.

So far as I can make out, knickerbockers have not an American origin, in the sense of the garment having been devised by an American tailor; and, if my remembrance serves me correctly, it was an English

lady, writing to the *Times*, some six-and-thirty years ago, who stated, that she had made for her little boy some very neat and cosy galligaskins out of a pair of old trousers belonging to her husband. She had given, she added, the name of "knickerbockers" to these garments, because she had been looking at George Cruikshank's illustrations to Diedrich Knickerbocker's—that is to say, Washington Irving's—*History of New York*, in which George has depicted divers Dutch worthies arrayed in prodigiously voluminous breeches. Even at present there is an old Manhattan family in New York who bear the highly suggestive name of Ten Brock.

To behold the youngsters at tea was likewise a joy. The quantities of bread and butter they put away; the cups of tea and cocoa and milk and water they consumed; the numbers of buns and slices of plum-cake they contrived to dispose of filled me not only with delight, but with bewilderment. The staying powers of those little boys and girls demolishing their holiday grub, reminded me of a little white Pomeranian dog of which, for at least a dozen years, I was the proud possessor. He had during his long career several names. Sometimes, I believe he was called Tradelli, at others Dr. Biggs; sometimes he was Bismarck, and occasionally Hobson Jobson. His real appellation, I believe, was Ivan the Terrible, and when he came to me, a puppy, his then owner triumphantly declared that he would never be big enough to fill a quart pot. He grew somewhat larger than that measure of capacity;

but he was always a very diminutive bow-wow. He had fought every dog and bitten every child in Mecklenburg Square; but in the domestic circle he was the kindest little creature imaginable, and had clearly the heart that could feel for another. His greatest accomplishment next to begging was barking; and it often used to puzzle me how so much bark could come out of such a small dog. I brought him with me to Victoria Street, where he died of old age, and we had him buried in Hyde Park; and I will never have another dog.

It was the sight of the children merrily "wolfing" their tea, that brought back the image of Ivan the Terrible, with his many aliases, to my mind. To be sure, the children at the Crystal Palace did not bark; but it was enrapturing to listen to their rippling laughter and chatter. When at length their repast was over, they scattered again, and went trotting about the palace, pattering with their small feet like so many armies of white mice, and then pouring out down the great staircase by the fountains into the gardens, gamboling and racing, and sliding down steep embankments, and enjoying themselves with a thoroughness of glee, that to my mind only English children can display.

The Crystal Palace is not only a great school of artistic and technical education, and a place of varied and innocent amusement, but it is likewise the finest playground for children in the whole kingdom; and, in the interests of the public happiness and the

public morality, it ought to have a handsome endowment from the State. It is wicked and nonsensical to assert that private enterprise, and private enterprise alone, should be the purveyor of amusement to the people. It is idle, wicked, and mendacious into the bargain, to say that the State cannot afford to endow such a thoroughly national institution as the Crystal Palace. How many thousand pounds a year do we blow away in gunpowder on Woolwich Common, or on Southsea Beach? How many thousands more have we recently spent on torpedoes—beshrew their murderous name!—which are being tested, and turn out to be utterly worthless?

You are not to think that these legions of little ones were destitute of adult guides, philosophers, and friends; or that they were allowed to wander about the palace and grounds at their own sweet wills, or revel entirely in their own devices in the way of play. When we had had our own dinner, and I came out into the garden about eight o'clock to smoke a cigar, the children in regiments, in battalions, in squadrons and platoons, were being marshalled and formed in line for the purpose of merrily marching them towards the entrance leading to the railway stations; or, rather might they be likened to so many flocks of sheep under the guardianship of careful shepherds and shepherdesses, who, with walking-sticks and umbrellas in lieu of crooks, were collecting the lambs and gently gathering up those who were straying; and who, although to the stranger the children might have been at tea-time, or

at their games, even as "forty feeding like one," were evidently familiar with the faces of every one of their young charges. It was growing dusk ere the last flock had got well on their way out of the palace; but, in the remote distance, one could hear their shrill cheering as they entered the carriages which were to take them home, a little tired perhaps, but ah, so happy!

As to ourselves, we lingered in the palace grounds till the dusk had deepened into night; and driving home through the green lanes, one of our companions, a lady, undertook to count the couples of sweethearts whom we encountered placidly strolling along in the moonlight. She left off at a hundred and eighty-seven, by which time we were in sight of the late Bon Marché, Brixton. After that there were no more sweethearts; there were only the blazing gas, and the blinding electric light, and the striving, palpitating crowds, filling the streets of Nineveh, that Great City.

No sweethearting couples did *I* count; for all the time that I had passed at the Crystal Palace, and all the way home, I had been thinking of the magnificent Pleasure Dome, which the genius of Joseph Paxton imagined, and which the will of the nation, guided by the counsel of the wise and good Prince Consort, decreed. I witnessed the opening of the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park by Her Majesty the Queen; and I can see her in the mirror of my memory now, with the Prince Consort, in a Field Marshal's uniform, by her

side. With her, also, were the little Princess, eleven years old, who is now the Empress Frederick of Germany, and a little boy a year younger arrayed in Highland dress, and who is Albert Edward, Prince of Wales. I can see the Archbishop of Canterbury in lawn sleeves pronouncing the benediction on the enterprise that day inaugurated ; and then the Sovereign, with her Consort and her children, followed by the Primate, the Lord Chancellor, and the Judges, and a host of great officers of State, courtiers, diplomatists, Exhibition commissioners, and committee-men, made the circuit of the entire building ; the route being kept by the Yeomen of the Guard, with their glittering halberts, and the Royal trumpeters meanwhile blaring out joyous *fanfares* from their silver trumpets.

You know that when the Great Exhibition of '51 had run its marvellous and unprecedented course, notwithstanding the bitter opposition of good old cranky Colonel Sibthorpe, who was continually thanking Providence that he had never entered "the bazaar full of rubbish," the Crystal Palace was somehow or another transported to a site near Upper Norwood, which, although not actually in Sydenham, the greater part being in Lambeth parish, is always considered to belong to Sydenham. How they got the thousands of tons of iron, and the thousands upon thousands of panes of glass, to Sydenham Hill, there is no room here to describe, if indeed I could tell the tale. I only know that the thing was done ; and that visiting the works in progress at Sydenham sometime in 1853, I wrote in

Household Words an article entitled, "Fairy Land in '54," pointing out what would be the chief attractions in the palace and grounds, then rapidly approaching completion.

Perhaps after all that which was, humanly speaking, a fairy structure, was brought from Hyde Park to Sydenham on a magician's carpet; but whether that was the case, or whether the thousands of tons of iron and glass were conveyed to Sydenham in balloons, or in Pickford's or Carter-Paterson's vans, there stands the palace, the rebuilding of which I watched just as I had done its original edification in London. The party which visited the fairyland that was to be, and which left London on a murky late October day, comprised Sir Joseph Paxton himself; Mr. William Henry Wills, the assistant editor of *Household Words*; the famous dramatist, essayist, and wit, Douglas Jerrold; Mark Lemon, the editor of *Punch*; Owen Jones, the decorative architect, and author of *The Grammar of Ornament*; Charles Knight, of Penny Cyclopædia, History of England, and Shakespearian Commentary's fame, and your humble servant, with the exception of whom, not one of that merry band of pilgrims to Sydenham survives. We tramped manfully for a good two hours through the stiff soil from which was rising a structure more wonderful even than its forerunner; but I fail to remember the hotel at which we afterwards dined. Possibly it was a humble village inn at Beulah Spa—for the transformation of Sydenham, Anerley, and Upper Norwood into a handsome suburban city, as

beautiful and as smiling perhaps as one of those twenty-two cities which once glorified the now desolate Campagna of Rome, had not then been begun.

Still, the hill to be crowned by the palace and grounds commanded a prospect which, if it did not equal in sublimity that of the hills which girdle Rome, yet possessed features of unequalled loveliness in richly wooded and softly undulating plains, rising at last to the distant acclivities of Kent and Surrey. I was at the opening of the palace in 1854; but ere that pageant took place, I dined as a guest of the distinguished comparative anatomist, Mr. Waterhouse Hawkins, in the interior of the model of some gigantic Saurian, on a margin of the lake, where also were to be seen other life-sized models of the former gigantic inhabitants of the earth. I cannot remember whether it was in the stomach of the Iguanodon, or in that of the *Malæotherium*, the *Anoplotherium*, the *Plesiosaurus*, or the *Megatherium*, that we feasted; but we did hold a very joyous banquet in an improvised dining-room not much larger than the cabin of a small yacht.

Another exceptional dinner that I partook of within the walls of the palace itself was about a year after it had been opened. Shareholders did not then enjoy the privilege of visiting the palace on Sundays; but I happened to know one of the early Directors of the Company. I was one of a small party of his personal friends who went down to the palace one Sunday afternoon and dined in the Alhambra Court. We squatted on our hams *à la Turc* round the Fountain

of the Lions, and the bill of fare comprised pillafs and kibabs, which we pretended to like and didn't; and then we proceeded to the terrace to enjoy *narghilés* and chibouks, and pretended to like the Latakia tobacco and the thick grouty Mocha coffee which accompanied the pipes; but I am afraid we liked those post-prandial refreshments no more than we had done our pillafs and kibabs.

You very rarely see a *narghilé*, which is the Turkish equivalent for the Indian hookah in Constantinople, in the present day. It has been dethroned by the cigarette; and, indeed, the last time that I was in the Levant it was not until the steamer touched at the Greek island of Syra, where we spent a few hours, that I could manage to obtain at the *café* a *narghilé* on which to experiment. The pipe had to be "cooked," or preliminarily smoked, in the kitchen before it was brought up to me, for, to the Oriental mind, no Frank is capable of drawing the first twenty puffs through the glass reservoir, filled with rose water, and so, through many convolutions, through the amber mouth-piece between his lips.

Some weeks afterwards, however, I did manage to purchase a *narghilé* in the Bezesteen at Stamboul; and taking it to the house of my dear friend—now, alas! deceased,—Eugene Schuyler, who was at the time Consul-General of the United States at the Sublime Porte, we had a *narghilé séance*. It was scarcely a success, and I speedily abandoned my own hookah for a cigar. Schuyler managed his *narghilé*, with that

phlegmatic determination worthy of a member of an ancient Dutch long-piped smoking family. An American friend of his, who had come to Turkey for the purpose of studying early Byzantine architecture, and who was so venturesome as to struggle with the old-fashioned Turkish pipe, had an experience of it not altogether agreeable. He had been drawing away at a *narghilé* for about a minute and a half, when we noticed that his countenance grew first very yellow, then very green, and then very white. "How do you like it?" we asked. "Oh!" he replied, in a very faint voice, and with many gasps, "it is delicious; it is ethereal—it's heavenly—it's—I *don't think I shall live five minutes*;" and he tumbled off the divan on to the carpet in a dead faint. To be quite Oriental, our friend had swallowed the smoke, which we had to press and pummel and knead out of him in spirals issuing from his nostrils and his mouth, and, as I thought, from his eyes and his ears. We got him round at last, by the administration of a liquid a little stronger than sherbet; but he declared that that particular *narghilé*, the first that he had ever tried to smoke, should likewise be the last. In all probability he kept his word.

THREE P.M. : AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY

THIS is a Saturday afternoon ; and, as usual on this day, thank goodness, I have nothing to do. If I had anything to do, wild horses would not make me do it. Circumstances, however, over which I have no control, prevent me from going out of town this instant Saturday ; so having lunched, smoked my inter-luncheon cigar, read my *Saturday Review*, my *Athenæum*, my *Academy*, my *Lancet*, my *Notes and Queries*, and my New York *Puck*, the last a caustically humorous journal, capitally illustrated, I made up my mind to take a little walk. It was not a very long one : only a stroll from Pall Mall to Garrick Street, Covent Garden, and back again.

Brief as was my saunter, it afforded me plenty of opportunity for observation and cogitation. What changes have I not seen in the line of route not many hundreds of yards in length between the eastern corner of Pall Mall and Garrick Street itself. The last-named thoroughfare was not constructed when I was young, and it owed its existence very much to the untiring efforts of Albert Smith, who did much more as a social reformer than his contemporaries gave him credit for, and who was continually protesting in the newspapers

—he was the “London Scoundrel” of the *Times*—and in his own books and magazine articles, against a narrow and inconveniently crowded little thoroughfare called New Street, running out of St. Martin’s Lane, towards Covent Garden, which New Street is still existent, but the traffic in which has been much lightened by the building of Garrick Street, which obviously derived its name from the Garrick Club, which migrated thither from its original home, King Street.

As for St. Martin’s Lane, it has been so wonderfully transformed within the last few years, that I almost fail to recognise my old familiar thoroughfare. The slums at its southern extremity have all been cleared away; and there is a really spacious and handsome area, where I can remember only a choked-up labyrinth of noisome courts and alleys. Throughout the Lane, as far up as Long Acre, I see lofty buildings, warehouses, offices, chambers, and a theatre; all surprises and revelations to me; but I miss the stick shop at the corner of Little St. Martin’s Court, where there used to be a huge gnarled cudgel of some outlandish wood, the knob of which was carved into the semblance of a human head, which might have been intended for the portrait, either of the King of the Cannibal Islands, or of the Giant Bolivorax. At this shop umbrellas as well as sticks used to be sold; but the grotesquely carved head of which I have just spoken evidently suggested to Mr. G. Herbert Rodwell the notion of his *Memoirs of an Umbrella*.

There is another institution also in the Lane which

I miss, a certain tavern, to wit, with the sign of "The Coach and Horses," of which the landlord, in my time, was a renowned professional pugilist, called Ben Caunt. He was a fearfully hard hitter, so I have been told, and shared with the Russian Count Orloff the reputation of being able to squeeze a pint pewter pot quite flat with the fingers of one hand. I had the honour of being introduced to Mr. Caunt by my friend, Mr. Owen Swift, also a famous prize-fighter. He was, I believe, the champion of the light-weights, and was as mild, kind-hearted, and as friendly a little man as you would wish to meet with ; only, in the course of his career, he had been so unfortunate as to kill one or two brother bruisers, with whom he had fought.

When I was introduced to Mr. Caunt, he shook hands with me ; and, although he did not exactly shatter the lower extremities of my radial and carpal bones, or crush my fingers, and squeeze my muscles into a jelly, my hand was sore for some days, from the force of his friendly but formidable grip. Spirit licenses, so the tradition runs, can never die so long as the house is well-conducted ; and, for aught I know, the vanished "Coach and Horses" may be still lurking behind a hoarding ; and when the vast structural improvements which are going on on the western side of St. Martin's Lane are completed, a new Coach and a new team of Horses may make their appearance in a most brilliant manner.

What business I had to transact, or, rather, what pleasure I wished to enjoy in Garrick Street, was soon accomplished ; and I walked slowly back to Pall Mall,

through Trafalgar Square. The gates at the base of the stone staircase leading to the National Gallery were open, and, without the slightest intention of looking at the pictures, I ascended the steps, and, in sheer idleness, loitered for a quarter of an hour on the balcony in front of the portico, and gazed on the wonderfully animated scene beneath. There were other loiterers and pleasure-seekers besides myself—foreigners, country cousins, a clergyman or two, and some meek-looking folk of both sexes, who might belong to that numerous and inoffensive class of people with small independent means of their own, and with nothing to do.

I think, for the accommodation of such individuals, the authorities might see their way to providing a few garden-seats on the balcony, where the idlers might sit quietly and enjoy the solace of tobacco, while they surveyed the scene and the shifting groups below.

Change! why, there are as many changes which I note in Trafalgar Square as there are transformation scenes in half a dozen Christmas pantomimes at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. In the year 1836 we were living in King Street, St. James's, opposite St. James's Theatre. Trafalgar Square was then being laid out, and the area was surrounded by an immense hoarding, which, notwithstanding minatory notices of "Stick no Bills," and "Bill-Stickers, Beware," was continually plastered over with placards relating to all kinds of things, theatrical and commercial, and at election time with political squibs. There were in those days no bill poster advertising-contractors. The

bill-stickers were an independent race, whose main objects in life were first, to get a sufficient number of bills to stick up, and next, to cover over the placards pasted on the hoardings by their rivals. Thus the perpetually superposed bills led to a most amusing confusion of incongruities. If you tried to read, say, six square yards of posters, the information was conveyed to your mind that Madam Malibran was about to appear in the opera of Cockle's Pills; that the leader for Westminster was the only cure for rheumatism; that Mr. Van Amburg and his lions would be present at the ball of the Royal Caledonian Asylum; and that the *Sun* evening newspaper would contain Rowland's Maccassar Oil, two hundred bricks to be sold at a bargain; and the band of the Second Life Guards would be sure to ask for Dunn's penny chocolate at the Philharmonic Concert, with Mademoiselle Duvernay in the Cachuca.

I have told you that we lived in King Street, St. James's. Our apartments were on the first floor, and on the second resided a remarkably talented young harpist and pianist called John Parry, junior. John Parry, senior, I remember, was an ancient gentleman of Welsh extraction, who had written a voluminous work on the Music of the Principality. Harping and pianoforte playing were not the only accomplishments of the junior John; he was very deft with his pencil, and was continually making humorous sketches. Struck by the curious incongruities of the much-pasted-over hoardings, round the nascent Trafalgar Square, a portion of which

was being built on the site of the old Royal Mews, he made a very droll sketch of part of the hoarding, the contents of which, with the exercise of a little ingenuity, he converted into a positively side-splitting budget of absurdities. To this droll whim he gave the title of "Cross Readings"; the design was engraved and coloured, and on being published had an immense circulation.

Many middle-aged people will recollect genial, clever John Parry, junior, as a singer of comic songs at morning concerts. Then, for long years, he vanished from the metropolitan ken, and devoted himself, I believe, to the practice of an organist at a watering-place somewhere on the south coast; and then he made a brief reappearance at Mrs. German Reed's entertainments, and delighted his audiences once more with his marvellous pianoforte playing. It was the hoardings in the transformed St. Martin's Lane that reminded me of the old days when Trafalgar Square was rising on the ruins of the old Royal Mews—when there was no Nelson Column, no Admiral mastheaded on the top of the pillar, which is at least a diameter and a half too lofty; when there were no Landseer lions, and no spouting gingerbeer-bottle fountains. When I peer into the distance, it is an entirely new panorama which rises before me.

Gone for ever is the great, gloomy brick façade of Northumberland House, the town residence of the noble Percies. It was not a bad specimen of late Jacobean architecture, and you will remember that, from the centre of the pediment, there rose a stone pedestal

surmounted by the effigy of a lion, which, I believe, was removed at the demolition of Northumberland House to the Duke's mansion, Sion House, Isleworth. The only interest of a metropolitan character which attached to the image of the regal beast at the top of Northumberland House was, that it had led to the circulation of a more or less apocryphal story of a bet of a large sum being laid by a speculative gentleman that, merely by the utterance of two words, he would cause in the space of twenty minutes a crowd of five hundred persons to assemble in front of Northumberland House. All he did was to take up his station by the side of King Charles's equestrian statue at Charing Cross, and, lifting his head, gaze fixedly at the Northumbrian lion. Gradually groups began to form around him. They increased and increased until quite a dense little crowd assembled, and from this gathering there arose loud cries of, "What is it?" "What is it?" "What are you looking at?" The wagerer turned towards the crowd, and pointing at the lion of Northumberland House, quietly said, "It wags." Strange to relate, there was an immediate shout from the mob, "So it does!" and even at this day there may be some very elderly people ready to come into court and make affidavit that they did, with their own eyes, see the lion on the top of Northumberland House wag its tail.

There was a secret door of copper, painted to imitate brickwork, in the façade of Northumberland House, on the side towards the Strand; and many and many a time, as a boy, have I speculated on the uses of that

secret door, destitute as it was of handles, or steps, or lintel—who came in or who came out of it. It does not matter now. On the site of the ducal palace the sumptuous Grand Hotel has been built; lower down there is a towering political club; on the other side of Northumberland Avenue, built on the site of the ducal gardens, are two more sumptuous hotels, the Victoria and the Métropole, and beyond these prodigious structures I behold the turrets of the National Liberal Club, and at the end of the long vista of Whitehall and Parliament Street, I discern the horizon of the towers and pinnacles of the Houses of Parliament and the venerable walls of Westminster Abbey.

I look at my watch and find that I have yet another quarter of an hour before I am “fetched” by the “superior authority” and taken for a drive in the park. As I remarked, I had not when I went up the steps the slightest intention of entering the National Gallery, but it occurred to me that the remaining fifteen minutes might be very well utilised by taking a few turns in the Galleries. So in I went, and was at once relieved of my walking-stick by a courteous attendant. Seeing that the ridiculous system of depriving visitors of their sticks and umbrellas has been abandoned at the Royal Academy, and with eminently satisfactory results, I confess that it does seem slightly red-tapish, not to say stupid, to maintain the rule of compelling people to part with these trifling personal belongings before they are allowed to enter a picture gallery which is the property of the nation. I am sure that I never had any kind of

desire to poke my walking-stick or my umbrella through a painting by an old master ; and I am persuaded that there are many millions of English people, male and female, who are of the like mind with myself. Still, it must be admitted that, once in a generation or so, there may be among the visitors to the National Gallery some madman, who, in sheer frenzy, might strive to do injury to a valuable painting. Then again, the officials who take care of the sticks and umbrellas are Government employés, who may be old soldiers, and who, if this light work were not provided for them, might find it difficult to know how to spend their time.

Do not for one moment imagine, worthy readers of mine, that I have any wish to bother you or weary you by descanting on the works of art now rapidly increasing in number in the National Collection in Trafalgar Square. The place is open free, gratis, and for nothing, on most secular days of the week ; you have only to go there when you have any time to spare, see the pictures, and judge for yourselves. It is very possible that you may prove fundamentally as good art critics, if not sounder ones, than the writer of these lines, who has been grinding in the mills of art criticism for five-and-thirty laborious years. I remember once, in one of the most crowded streets of Manchester, halting before the shop window of a well-known print-seller. It was an engraving after Edwin Landseer's "Otter Hunt" that I was looking at ; and I was thinking of the barbarous cruelty of that so-called sport, when I accidentally overheard the fragment of a conversation between two

brawny scions of those hardy men of the north-west, of whom Hugh Miller wrote that "they bulk large in the forefront of humanity." They were seemingly of the artisan or factory-hand class, and the object of their admiration was a splendid steel engraving after Rosa Bonheur's "Horse Fair." "That's fine," quoth Tim Bobbin No. One. "Fine!" echoed his companion,—I would not essay to imitate the Lancashire dialect—"Fine! no fear! What a jolly lot of pluck and go there is in yon lass, to be sure." Bobbin No. Two had evidently read about "La Grande Mademoiselle" of French painting in his illustrated paper, and whether illustrated papers cost sixpence or a penny, and whether they be issued weekly or daily, there is, to my mind, no sort of pictorial journal, conducted on sound and wholesome lines, which is not a distinct boon to civilisation, and a practical agent in the teaching, the amusement, and the amelioration of the people, from the very highest to the very humblest grades.

I entered the building and delight to record that the halls of the National Gallery this particular Saturday afternoon were full; and that large numbers of the visitors were of the working class, and were not stolidly tramping from gallery to gallery, just glancing with listless gaze at the glorious works of art on the walls; but that they were steadily passing from room to room and scanning long and lovingly the marvellous collection of paintings which have grown up in Trafalgar Square from the nucleus of the Angerstein Gallery of thirty-eight pictures, purchased in 1824 by the Government, at the

trifling price of fifty-seven thousand pounds, and which, were England bankrupt, and forced to sell her art treasures, would now fetch possibly half a million of money, to say nothing of the prodigious additions which have been made to the collection during the last fifty years.

FOUR P.M.; A GARDEN PARTY AT THE TOWER

YOU have not, like the Puritan Ironsides in Lord Macaulay's ballad, "Come forth in triumph from the North, with your hands and your feet and your raiment all red"; neither has "your rout sent forth a joyous shout," and you have not been treading grapes in any wine-press whatsoever. As a matter of fact, the company among which, in a very pleasant mood, you find yourself at 4 P.M. on a golden July afternoon—not the July recently expired—is composed of some of the "smartest" people in London, whom it would be outrageously insulting to designate "a rout"; and, touching the wine-press, you do not possess such an article, even if you felt disposed to take off your boots and socks, and tread the grapes, which you have just purchased from Miss Mary Ann Solomon, in the Central Avenue of Covent Garden Market.

Still, you are entitled to go thus far with Macaulay, as to ask yourself, wherefore you have come forth, not from the North, but from the South-western district, and why you find yourself arrayed in your best frock-coat, patent-leather boots, lavender kid gloves, a carna-

tion in your buttonhole, and an ebony cane with an ivory crutch in one hand; the whole forming the war-paint, or exceptionally festive gear, which, as a rule, you only assume at wedding breakfasts, and on Private View days at the Royal Academy. You are thus attired "up to the nines," for the reason, that the Chief Commissioner of Works has honoured you with an invitation to a Garden Party at the Tower of London; and that is why you are waiting at the river-steps of the Houses of Parliament, for the arrival of the steamer *Little Ease*, which is to convey the numerous party, of which you are the humblest member, to the grim old fortress which you have known for more than fifty years, under very varying circumstances.

By the way, the fact of your being a thorough Cockney, old and experienced in the ways of the town, does not at all necessitate your knowing anything about the citadel, which Julius Cæsar did *not* build. At a public dinner given in London to Sir George Dibbs, sometime Premier of New South Wales, I met an old friend from Melbourne, who told me that in his youth he lived somewhere near St. Katharine's Docks, while the counting-house in which he was engaged was in Lower Thames Street. His directest route, from point to point, was through the Tower; and on six mornings and afternoons in every week, for some years, he regularly passed in at one postern and out at another, and so, *vice versa*, between home and business. "I declare," remarked my Melbourne friend to me, "that during all these years I never bestowed a single thought

on the White Tower, the Beauchamp Tower, the Brass Mount, the Jewel Tower, St. Peter's Church, the Tower Green, or the Moat. They had nothing to do with me, and I had nothing to do with them."

Many scores of thousands of Cockneys are, I daresay, in the condition which was once my friend's. There are born, and bred, and case-hardened Londoners, who have never been to the top of the Monument, nor inside St. Paul's, and to whom the interior of Westminster Abbey is as unfamiliar as the Thames Tunnel or the Museum of Economic Geology. Economic Geology has been humorously defined as the "Art of Skinning Flints"; but be that as it may, I have never visited the establishment in Jermyn Street; I have never been to Sir John Soane's Museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields; never to Kew Gardens; and I have never seen the interior of the Banqueting House, Whitehall, although, when I am in London, I usually pass Inigo Jones's noble structure at least twice a day. So you see, that even as a Cockney, I have a great deal to learn.

The steamer *Little Ease* belies her name; she is in reality a very trim and comfortable little craft, and when she has shipped her "smart" freight of passengers she looks quite festive; the quarter-deck is covered with crimson cloth, above which has been stretched a pretty pink-and-white striped awning. Then there are banners galore, a profusion of flowering plants, and a brass band discoursing merry tunes. There is a dense throng of ladies and gentlemen in gay attire; and, unless you are mistaken, there is a Royalty on board. You only hear

a dim and distant rumour to that effect, since you are comfortably wedged up at the bow, between a major-general and a Scotch baronet. However, you comfort yourself with the surmise that a point-lace parasol, far away towards the stern, may be Royalty's parasol ; and that should surely be enough for you. The old lady who went to hear John Wesley preach, found the congregation so tremendous that she was unable to get within listening distance of the illustrious Methodist ; but she remarked afterwards, "that she had seen the wagging of his blessed wig, and that," she added, "was enough for her."

As the *Little Ease* puffs, and pants, and snorts, and gasps down stream, you find yourself lamenting for the fiftieth time, that petty parochial jealousies and sordid vested interests should have prevented, after the Great Fire, the complete execution of Sir Christopher Wren's magnificent scheme for embanking both sides of the river from Lambeth to London Bridge. The great architect was not even permitted to carry out his less ambitious scheme "for building a commodious quay on the whole bank of the river from the Tower to Blackfriars." Since Sir Christopher's time, many public-spirited architects and projectors have brought forward plans for embanking Old Father Thames ; and at length Sir J. W. Bazalgette constructed the Victoria Embankment, to which was subsequently added the Albert, from the Lambeth end of Westminster Bridge to Vauxhall, and a third section extending from Millbank to the Cadogan Pier, Chelsea.

But you and a multitude of Londoners want such a thorough embankment of the river, as exists at Paris, and at St. Petersburg—long riverain terraces, lined with palaces, churches, public halls, hotels, and schools. Of course the commercial value of our river must be fully recognised ; but surely a time will come when the wharves and the “works,” the breweries, the factories, and the warehouses will be banished a long way down the Thames ; so that the river, between London Bridge and Battersea Bridge, will assume that aspect which properly belongs to the metropolis of the world—an aspect of structural splendour and beauty. Possibly, you will have been eating your salad by the roots for many years before that happy consummation comes ; but come it will, some day, or you are a Dutchman.

Here is the Tower. Antique, frowning, formidable to look upon, as you have known it for more than half a century. You do not land at Traitor’s Gate. As a matter of fact, the water-way passing under St. Thomas’s Tower, to the flight of steps in Water Lane, and generally known as Traitor’s Gate, has been blocked up ; and what has become of the massive old timber gate itself, you do not know. About a dozen years ago, your old friend, the late Phineas T. Barnum, called on you with the interesting information that he had just bought Traitor’s Gate at a sale of old Government Stores, and that he was about to re-erect it as a portal to his Museum at New York ; and “would you, as an early student of the Tower of London,” the great showman continued, “be kind enough to give him a certificate or testimonial

to the effect that the ancient wooden barrier which he had bought was the identical construction which had been opened so often for the admission of State prisoners." You declined, for obvious reasons, to give the voucher in question ; but you told your old friend that if he was not Barnum enough to make the American public believe that this mass of timber was the veritable Traitor's Gate, he was not half Barnum enough for you.

You must have landed, if your remembrance serves you correctly, at the Tower wharf ; yet, did you linger by St. Thomas's Tower for some few minutes, pondering on the stories of the many famous captives who were rowed by the water-way, to land at the fateful staircase. Was it not brave Queen Bess, who, when as Princess Elizabeth she was consigned to the Tower by her vindictive sister Mary, sat down on the steps, and, notwithstanding the persuasions of Master Lieutenant, refused to budge an inch, saying, "That she was no traitress, and would not make a traitor's journey." If the plucky princess, afterwards the "bright Occidental Star" of the Prayer-Book, and the "Fair Vestal thronéd by the west" of Shakespeare, really sat down on those stone steps, you know not. But Shakespeare's undying apostrophe ! You do not believe in second sight ; still, every time you read Oberon's enchanting speech to Puck, in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and repeat the melodious verses that tell how "Cupid all armed" took a certain aim at the Vestal, and "loosed his love-shaft smartly from his bow, as it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts," you see, as distinctly as you see the

White Tower now, the complacent smile that must have beamed on the lips of the Virgin Queen, as her ravished ears sucked in one of the most eloquent and the most exquisitely subtle compliments ever paid by mortal man to mortal woman. How proud and glad at that bright moment our Eliza must have been, to know that she and her people had their Shakespeare.

There is no need to apologise for thinking of the Bard of all Time on the occasion of this memorable Garden Party, for the Tower of London is almost as much Shakespeare's land as Stratford-on-Avon is. The poet, no doubt, knew every nook and cranny in the fortress of his time ; yet it has always been a subject of bewilderment to you, that he never got into trouble with authority, for the astonishing boldness, not to say audacity, which he displayed in his description in *Henry VIII.* of the trial of Katharine of Aragon, and of the fall of Wolsey. For far less outspoken utterances, more than one poet of Shakespeare's epoch was clapped, not into the Tower, but into Newgate or the Fleet. Perhaps the Queen, remembering that inimitable compliment in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, forbore to criticise very narrowly the language in the play of *King Henry VIII.* ; and, after all, the king does come out in Shakespeare's drama the bluffest of King Hals.

Then, for another hour or so, the "smart" company are personally conducted round all the show-places in the fortress, while you follow at a discreet distance, musing. All the Tower "lions" are trotted out by the attendant warders ; the visitors are shown St. John's

Chapel in the White Tower, and they even ascend to the lead-covered roof of that antique keep. They are introduced to the Beacon Tower, the Bloody Tower, the Lantern, the Salt, and the Devlin Towers; the Armouries, the Jewel Tower, and the Church of St. Peter-on-the-Green. They are shown the platform on which, when Sir Francis Burdett was imprisoned in the Tower under warrant of the Speaker of the House of Commons, he used to take morning and afternoon exercise; and, in particular, the company—the ladies especially—peep curiously at the cross-chamber vault—the real Little Ease—darker and damper than its two brethren, in which Guy Fawkes, and the other Gunpowder Plot conspirators, are said to have been incarcerated.

Then there is an adjournment to a marquee on the parade before the barracks, where there are long buffets piled high with “all the delicacies of the season”—of the afternoon tea order, at least; and while chalices of Lipton’s tea are going round, and “other lips” have made acquaintance with cunningly-concocted champagne and cider cups, the band of the Grenadier Guards is making the sunny time melodious with selections from *Carmen* and *La Cavalleria Rusticana*.

It is impossible, we all know, to get a quart of any liquid into a bottle of which the measure of capacity does not exceed a pint. Intellectually speaking, you do not hold much more than a gill; and the Tower, from the historical, picturesque, and social points of view, may be estimated as at least a gallon. If you

proposed, then, to fill ten royal octavo volumes, small print, with successive gills of observations on the Tower, until the full gallon measure was reached, your readers would rise up in insurrection against you, and you would be voted a dismal and disastrous bore.

Take one of the Tower warders, for instance. Here he stands on the Tower Green, over against the little church of St. Peter-in-Chains. Scan him well; he is worth looking at. A tall, hale, grizzled veteran, his broad breast covered with medals. He has fought, it may be, in the Crimea, in China, in India, in South Africa; he left the army with the rank of sergeant-major; his old commanding officer, who knew and appreciated the worth of the valiant old non-com., used his influence for him, and got him the comfortable, honourable berth which he now holds. Please to understand, that a Tower warder is not a Beef-eater, and that he belongs to a corps altogether distinct from that of the Yeomen of the Guard. Indeed, he never goes West officially, save on the rare occasions of Her Majesty opening Parliament in person. Then, he and a brother warder take the Imperial crown, sceptre, and sword of State, in a Royal carriage to Westminster. Whether the warders take the regalia back with them to the Tower; or whether, on the return journey, the splendid baubles are in the custody of the Yeomen of the Guard, you are not precisely aware; but in all probability the regalia on the journey both westward and eastward is accompanied by a strong escort of police.

The Tower warder this afternoon is in undress


uniform—a blue cloth tunic, and trousers, with scarlet cuffs to the first, and stripes of the same hue to the second ; all of half military, half mediæval fashion. But you can remember to have seen him, in “full fig,” as the saying is, when the warders were paraded on the Tower Green on the day when brave old Field-Marshal Sir John Burgoyne was buried in the vault of the parish church of that Tower, of which he had been the Constable. The warder’s full dress is almost identical with that of the Yeomen of the Royal Body Guard ; but there is some slight difference, so you think, between the trunk hose of the Tower warders, and those of their congeners at St. James’s. The former, however, on gala days, are as gorgeous to look upon as the “Yeoman of the Guard” in Sir John Millais’s noble picture. Scarlet doublet, the Royal cognisance embroidered in gold on front and back, crimson hose, rosetted shoes, Elizabethan ruff, low-crowned Tudor hats, encircled by the roses of York and Lancaster.

You remember, finally, an odd little circumstance in connection with the Tower warder’s ruff at the funeral of Sir John Burgoyne. The veteran, you know, was in the fullest of full dress, and carried his glittering halbert with a rich tassel of mingled bullion and crimson silk ; but, eyeing him closely, you were amused to perceive that, within his ruff, his neck was encircled with a pair of stand-up linen collars, of the regular old-fashioned tying-with-tape-behind pattern,—“a pair of gills,” as you used to call them when you were young, and wore removable collars, tied behind with tape, yourself.

Was there not something slightly incongruous, slightly absurd, in the assumption by this mediævally clad warrior of shirt-collars, almost Gladstonian in their angularity? Had the warder been twitted with that which seemed to be a solecism in his costume, he might have pointed at a notable precedent for the apparent anomaly. You have at home an engraving after Sir Thomas Lawrence's renowned full-length portrait of George IV. in the full robes of the Garter, which include a ruff a little smaller than that of a Beef-eater, or of a Tower warder, and, if you will carefully examine with a magnifying glass the upper part of the Royal costume, you will find that, inside the ruff, His Majesty wears a pair of stand-up collars, as Gladstonian as those worn by the warder at the interment of Sir John Burgoyne.

TEN P.M. : A CULTURE CONVERSAZIONE

THIS is a grand night—the grandest, perhaps, in the whole season—for the members and guests of the Androgynæcean Cénacle of Culture, patrons ; their Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Trebizond, that well-known literary, artistic, musical, choregraphic, philosophical, and theosophical Association, which periodically meets at the Niminypiminy Rooms, somewhere in the neighbourhood of Eleusis Square, N.W., to unbend their minds in social intercourse, to discuss in a light and pleasant fashion the current topics of the day, while relaxing not in the ardour of their Cult of the Beautiful ; and who also, on these festive occasions, listen to the enchanting strains of chamber-music, and the exertitions of eminent amateur vocalists of both sexes, and partake of the lightest of light refreshments—when there is any room at the buffet : which contingency is rare. You happen to have the advantage of the acquaintance of young Camel Harewood, who devotes his rare artistic gifts to the study and practice of the Beautiful—always with a big B—that is to say, he is a “stippler” engaged at a photographer’s studio in Bayswater. He is one of the leading spirits



of the Androgynæcean Cénacle of Culture; and through his influence you have been favoured with a card of invitation for this night's gathering. If you accept the bidding in a proper spirit, you should prize that piece of pasteboard as highly as though it were the Lord Chamberlain's intimation of his being commanded by Her Majesty to invite you to a State Ball at Buckingham Palace.

It is true, that at the last-named festivity you would be aware of Royalty, and behold some of the most resplendent grandees of the bluest blood in Great Britain and Ireland; but in the Niminypiminy Rooms you will come in contact with something far superior to blue blood. You will meet, sir, with Brains—brains, always combined with benignity, and sometimes—well, just sometimes, with Beauty.

Evening dress is, of course, *de rigueur* at the Niminy-piminy Rooms to-night; so you array yourself in what you consider to be irreproachable evening garb; but when the obliging Camel Harewood makes his appearance, you find that his costume far surpasses yours in cultured picturesqueness. The gentlemen members of the Androgynæcean Cénacle of Culture wear the insignia of the Society—a badge in enamelled gold, in the similitude of a bird, the exact nature of which has been made a matter of lively controversy. Some say that the enamelled biped is a dove; others assert that it is a swan; while there are cynical critics who allege that it is a goose, and nothing but a goose. Whatsoever bird it be, the male members of the Cénacle wear the badge

at their buttonholes when in full dress, and this decoration, in conjunction with a satin vest of pale amber,—a truly cultured colour—gives to the wearer an air of *je ne sais quoi*—excuse the French expression, for I am at a loss to find an English equivalent.

The Niminyminy Rooms are so called for the reason that they form part of the premises of the well-known Niminyminy Club, a body with very varied attributes ; seeing that they include the comforts and the recreations of a social circle, and an extensive picture-dealing and print-selling business, and the publication of the monthly journal, *Elutheria*, exclusively devoted to the interests of culture. Their Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Trebizond are respectively President and Vice-President of the Club, the committee of which is always ready to lend its spacious rooms once a month during the summer and winter seasons to the Androgynæcean Cénacle. You have heard also that the Prince is likewise the chairman of the well-known Royal Didascolon Syndicate for publishing poems, plays, and three-volume novels by hitherto unknown authors ; and the prospectus of this fascinating enterprise promises aspiring poets, dramatists, and novelists a dividend of at least thirty per cent on the modest amount of capital which they are expected to invest.

The entrance fee of two guineas is a mere fleabite, and the annual subscription of two additional guineas is almost ridiculously cheap ; but then, provided you are a shareholder to a certain amount, you are privileged to have your works brought out at cost price—the

Syndicate beneficently undertaking to save you all trouble in the way of paper, print, commission on publishing, advertising, and so forth ; all of which, to avoid subsequent disputes or misunderstandings, are lumped together in a neat little round sum, which you pay beforehand. Nothing, clearly, could be at the same time so sweetly cultured and so thoroughly business-like as this arrangement.

The Niminypiminy Club occupies a large but slightly ramshackle mansion in a street near Eleusis Square. On the ground floor are the extensive Fine Art Repositories of Huz, Buz and Pildash, those well-known virtuosos, whom you recollect as purchasers of the famous Walton-on-the-Naze Raffaele, which a poor widow woman at that interesting watering-place gladly parted with for two pounds seventeen shillings, but the value of which several well-known experts appraised at twelve thousand pounds sterling. Mr. Rockoil de Greese, the great American Petroleum King, was on the point of purchasing at the upset price the Walton-on-the-Naze masterpiece, with the intention of placing it in the picture gallery of his sumptuous marble palace in Fifth Avenue, New York City ; only, just before he sat down to sign the cheque, one Richard Tinto, an itinerant painter of Bohemian proclivities, came forward to declare that he had painted this reputed Raffaele, as a pot-boiler, for fifty shillings—the purchaser being the guileless widow woman, who turned out to be a very artful old crone who kept an Aunt Sally shop, and who for many years past had been making a very

good thing of it by pretending to have Old Masters in her possession, which she was gratefully willing, poor soul, to sell for a mere song, as she was quite unaware of the real value of the canvases. The embarrassing little affair soon blew over. Mr. Rockoil de Greese did not buy the bogus canvas; but Messrs. Huz, Buz and Pildash continue to do a pleasantly brisk business in unimpeachable Dresden and Sèvres china, Henri Deux ware, Cinque Cento tapestry, Chinese jade, Russian malachite, Venice glass chandeliers, antique bronzes, blue Nankin, and Crown Derby.

A selection of these art treasures have to all appearance been lent to the Niminypiminy Club; at least, bits of china and bronze, and pictures in oil and water colours of dubious extraction, are scattered on mantelpieces and side tables throughout the three saloons in which the Androgynæcean Cénacle holds its conversazione to-night. In particular, in the third apartment of the suite there hangs behind the buffet a prodigious piece of tapestry, surrounded by a highly ornate Renaissance border, the centre being occupied with a representation of the Feast of the Gods on Mount Olympus. This triumph of textile art, it is announced, is after Giulio Romano, but how many years "after" that celebrated master is not stated. Nor, again, have you time or opportunity to ascertain, from narrow ocular inspection, whether the huge square of arras has been worked by the needle, or woven, or merely painted on coarse canvas according to the subtle process carried on with much success at Florence. For

the rest, the rooms look handsome enough ; the carpet is a little dingy, and there are a few cracks in the walls and the ceiling, but the club is supplied with the electric light in abundance, and the whole scene is one of undeniable brilliancy.

Most judiciously, for the performance of the classical chamber music, which forms so important a feature in the evening's entertainment, the Committee of the Cénacle have secured the services of Bopp's Band, that well-known orchestra which was originally formed in the Grand Duchy of Gerolstein, for many years subsidised by his Ineffability the Grand Duke, and which has now migrated to London for the season, by special Grand Ducal permission. Bopp's Band discourses nothing but string and wood wind music. No braying Sax-horns, no clamorous cornets à piston, no gruff bassoons for them ; but instead of those harshly metallic instruments, Bopp brings to the fore a good store of flutes, and clarionets, and hautboys, of violins and 'cellos, and double-basses. As you enter, Bopp's instrumentalists, who are installed in the central and largest saloon, are lustily blowing and scraping away at some very classical work indeed. "Op : 97," so Camel Harewood whispers to you, of that mighty German composer, Von Stummakake. Not being musical, you find it somewhat difficult to make out whether "Op : 97" is a cantata, or a fugue, or an overture, or a requiem, or a symphony, or a fantasia ; and altogether, the last "number" in Von Stummakake's imposing work reminds you very much of an air which you used to

hear in your infancy, and which your nurse was accustomed to qualify as "the tune the old cow died of." On the whole, you come to the conclusion that a Torture Chamber was the original apartment in which "chamber" music of the Von Stummakakian order was performed.

Although you know nothing of Cecilia's divine art, either theoretically or technically, and although your soul is entirely innocent of any acquaintance with the mysteries of counterpoint or thorough bass, you have been endowed by nature with the gift called "an ear for music," and you thus derive unmingled delight from hearing pretty little Miss Fubbs, eighth daughter of Professor Fubbs, of the Mangosteen College, Rummipore, Bengal, warble that sweetest of modern English ballads, composed, it is true, by Signor Stuffato Spaghetti, originally from Bergamo, but long domiciled in London, "The Tear I licked from Lizzie's Cheek." Rapturously encored, clever little Miss Fubbs obliges the company with that irresistible Irish ballad, "Och! will ye ate the Praties now?" the latest production of that well-known composer, Herr Rauschinken Schweinkopf, originally from Stettin, in Pomerania, but long since domiciled in O'Connell Street, Dublin.

Later in the evening Miss Fubbs will find a rival in Madame Beatrice Maguillivrato—her husband is a braw Scot named Macgillivray, from Edinburgh town, who is deeply interested in the retail woollen trade. Then, according to the friendly Camel Harewood, you will have an opportunity of hearing a marvellous

Nocturne on the 'cello, performed by that talented Hungarian artiste, Otto Mgyzmyskzy, from Buda-Pesth, whom, however, when you do listen to his ravishing strains, you fancy that you heard once at a concert, at the Spa, Scarborough. Then Otto's name was not Mgyzmyskzy, but Moses. Later on, there will be a comic duet by the Sisters Limejuice, called "Captain Kicksey came to Tea ; Oh Dear, the Spooning o't !" ; and, of course, the evening's entertainment will not be complete without young Mr. Jollyboy's excruciatingly droll recitation, "My Wife and her Washerwoman," and a grand pianoforte *séance* by Megacephalus Bulbous, the marvellous American boy with the large head. He will give, so Camel Harewood tells you in an excited whisper, no less than thirty-seven variations on the *leit-motif*, of "Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay."

You do not, however, take all your musical recreation at once. "The circles of our felicities," wrote learned Sir Thomas Browne, "make short arches" ; so, to widen their span and protract their height, after you have had a spell of harmonic bliss, you stroll away to mingle with the animated groups in the saloon ; and you are introduced to celebrity after celebrity by the courteous Camel Harewood. You listen, with enchanted ears, to the words of wisdom and thoughtfulness, and polished elegance which drop like pearls from ever so many renowned lips, and you begin about eleven P.M. to understand what Culture is. If truth must be told, all this refined converse has made you slightly hungry, and perhaps, to a still greater degree, thirsty ; so you

nudge Camel Harewood in the ribs, just after Mrs. Colly Molley Puff, in blue spectacles and a Japanese tea-gown—which might be a bed-gown—has concluded a glowing ten minutes' address, the latest outcome of Neo-Buddhism, in connection with the discouragement of Vivisection and Vaccination, the Affinities between Agnosticism and Asafetida, and the Precipitation of divers interesting communications from the Mahatmas, domiciled in the middle of Thibet, strictly forbidding the faithful to wear stays, and as strictly enjoining them to believe in spirit-rapping, palmistry, and the veracity of the Tichborne Claimant. You whisper to Camel Harewood that you would like, if possible, to obtain a little refreshment, to which he replies, "Right you are, my boy, go in and win;" but although you experience very little difficulty in getting as far as the outskirts of the crowd in the third room, where the refreshment buffet is situated, it is quite another matter when you try to "win," or obtain something in the way of ices, or sandwiches, or tea and coffee, or aerated waters.

You are told that such articles really exist at the buffet; in fact, you meet a stout gentleman with a very florid countenance who is freely perspiring, and who tells you that twenty minutes ago he was within an ace of "collaring," as he more forcibly than elegantly phrases it, some claret cup, which, however, was dexterously whipped away from him, by the deft fingers of Miss Olga Bogeymann, the authoress of *The Shrieks of Transcendentalism; or Love, Blood, and Bread-and-Dripping*—the thrilling romance of which

the circulating libraries took so many hundreds of copies, and the perusal of which is supposed to have kept the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone out of his bed for an entire night. So at least, you read in that lively little æsthetic journal, *The Tomtit*, of which, by the way, the editor, Dr. Puny B. Pupp, is present to-night. Where the doctor got his degree is uncertain; but everybody calls him Dr. Pupp. He is well known to the nobility and gentry of North-West Kensington as Dr. Pupp; and who shall deprive him of the harmless prefix to his name?

It would be as cruel, perhaps, to question the right of the Prince of Trebizond to the style and title which His Highness assumes. It is true that he does not go to Court as the Prince of Trebizond; nor does Her Highness, the Princess, claim that dignity for herself at a Royal Drawing-room. It may be, after all, that the Prince and Princess know nothing of the circles of St. James's or Buckingham Palace, and are content with a simple-minded but frankly loyal homage, which their exalted rank secures for them in the cultured society of Upper Tooting, where they occupy a modest, semi-detached villa. Of course, the Prince has a Kiosque at Trebizond, a villa on the Lake of Como, a summer *châlet* in Switzerland, a palazzo at Venice, a chamois-hunting box in the Tyrol, and an *appartement* in the Avenue des Champs Elysées; but, in England, he gives himself no airs, and is satisfied with enjoying and imparting to others, the Culture which he finds in fullest bloom now at the Niminyminy Club, and

now at the periodical gatherings of the Androgynæcean Cénacle.

Not a very noticeable personage to look upon is His Highness the Prince of Trebizond. Scraggy little "wearish" middle-aged man with a red head. Shabbily dressed and, to all seeming, imperfectly washed. But how often does it happen that you are disappointed with the physical aspect of the illustrious! It is when the Prince speaks—with a slightly Irish brogue—that you discover how vast is the superiority of Mind over Matter. It may be just hinted, that His Highness has large estates in County Kerry, where, of course, he acquired his Hibernian accent. The Princess, moreover, who is stout but beaming and resplendent in sky-blue satin and garnets, is also, so you would imagine, from the Emerald Isle.

Well, midnight chimes, and you have had a very pleasant evening. You have heard plenty of music, both vocal and instrumental; and although the crowd surrounding the buffet was so dense and so furious in its efforts to obtain refreshments that you have come away hungry and thirsty, you have had your fill of culture, and the best thing you can do when you hail a hansom, is to go down to your club, and while you discuss your supper, try to elevate and ennoble the vulgar viands and potables which you may be consuming, by the remembrance of the thoroughly intellectual and artistic night you have spent in the society of the members of the Androgynæcean Cénacle.

EIGHT FORTY-FIVE A.M. : BREAKFAST ON BOARD A PULLMAN

I HAVE a habit—I do not know whether it be a good or a bad one, but it has been for a long time my custom—while I am dictating my “copy,” to turn over the leaves of a bound volume of some illustrated paper, say the *Graphic*, or the *Gentlewoman*, or the *Paris Illustration*. I do not find that cursory peeps at the pictures in the volume interrupt, to any perceptible extent, the sluggish but steady flow of my diction; nay, I find, even, that these glances at the wood-engravings are very often of direct help to me; calling up, as they do, images of bygone scenes which I have beheld, or of bygone people whom I have known. Under some circumstances, the seemingly desultory dallying with the illustrated paper has more than once suggested to me the idea for an article which, springing up armed cap-à-pie like Minerva from Jove’s head, has forthwith been translated into speech, and taken down by a careful amanuensis.

For example, I wished this morning to draw another picture of London-Up-to-Date life; and for a few minutes I felt undecided what particular hour of the

day I should select, and what special function I should describe this week. I may hint that I am very anxious to induct you into the humorous mysteries of Petticoat Lane on Sunday morning; but a neat disguise, consisting of a very seedy moleskin jacket, corduroy "kicksies," Blucher boots, a red neckerchief, and a billycock hat, which I have ordered for my expedition to the East End, is not quite ready yet. In process of time I hope (D.V.) to take my readers to a Board School, to a County Court, to a Theatrical Dancing Academy, to a Pantomime Rehearsal, and to a Cookery Exhibition; and especially to the great Gogmagog Co-operative Stores in You-Don't-Say-So Street. But, for one reason or another, not one of the subjects I have mentioned seemed suitable for my purpose to-day.

So, after a fashion, I essayed the "Sortes Virgilianæ" with a volume of the *Graphic* for the year 1870. What were they doing in London Up to Date two-and-twenty years ago? I opened the volume of the *Graphic* at random—"The Honourable Artillery Company's Ball." I don't know if the H.A.C. have had a ball at all this season; if they have been enjoying high jinks at Finsbury they have not invited me to partake of them; and the "Private View of the Exhibition of the Royal Academy" is gone and past. "State Concert at Buckingham Palace,"—that is ancient history so far as 1892 is concerned. "Marriage of Princess Louise and the Marquis of Lorne in St. George's Chapel, Windsor." Alas! I thought, and vainly thought, that

I should be able to say something about a royal wedding many weeks ago; but there has been "a rent instead of a garment, and burning instead of beauty"; and it is at graves and not at marriage altars that these old feet have stumbled. Turn again thy pages, O *Graphic*! What have we here? Upon my word, the very subject for a "London Up to Date." January 29, 1870: "A Dining-Car on the Union Pacific Railway, U.S.A."

"Now, what on earth," I seem to hear a large number of my esteemed readers exclaim, "can a dining-car on the Union Pacific Railway have to do with 'London Up to Date'? Is the man growing 'dotty'? Some time ago he told us that he had received a complimentary communication from an anonymous lady correspondent, who expressed her satisfaction at the circumstance that his writings 'exhibited so few signs of the decrepitude of age'; but here are age and decrepitude with a vengeance!" Wait a minute. Everybody knows that the Union Pacific Railroad joins on to the Central Pacific, which dovetails into a line still farther East—the three consecutive railroads bringing the traveller from Chicago safely, comfortably, and luxuriously, by way of Omaha, Ogden, and Sacramento City, to San Francisco. "With what face, then," my beloved readers may still demand, "can this, perhaps, demented, and, certainly, chuckle-headed writer treat the interior of an American dining-car, twenty-two years ago, as a thing appertaining in any shape, or in any sense, to an Up-to-Date picture of

English life and manners in the month of August 1892?"

At once I hope to make the little mystery quite clear to you. I am an old traveller across the Rocky Mountains; but for the nonce, I do not mean to say anything more, either about Pullman or Silver Palace-cars on the railroads between Chicago and the Golden Gates. It happens, nevertheless, that a cursory survey of the picture in the *Graphic* furnished me at once with my text; inasmuch, as only a few mornings since I travelled from Brighton to London Bridge terminus in a Pullman car, and on board thereof partook of breakfast.

Well; you may still urge somewhat disparagingly, there was nothing so very strange in *that* occurrence. The Pullman-car service on the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway is understood to be altogether up to date; and no doubt, the Pullman Car Company, as well, do their very best to minister to the comfort of the passengers. All I can say, in extenuation of the offence of telling people that which they know as well as I do, and possibly a great deal better, is, that up to the morning I have just mentioned, I had never taken a place in a Pullman car, leaving Brighton at 8.45 A.M. *Our* train, when we come up to Babylon on business, is the 9.45 A.M. one, which lands us at 11.5 at Victoria; and in five minutes afterwards we are in our chambers hard by, and in the midst of an avalanche of letters. We like the 9.45 A.M. because it is usually punctual, and not overcrowded; and, again, the hour at which it

starts allows us to consume our breakfast comfortably—a matter of some importance since, if you look at the comparatively terrible amount of time which in our advanced state of civilisation is taken up by the exertations of the bath and the toilette, and in giving directions to servants and so forth, it is difficult to see how you can get to the station before 9.45, unless you rise at six, or unless you forego your breakfast. Both of these contingencies should be scrupulously avoided; for, if you leave your bed earlier than it is your usual custom to rise, you will surely feel desperately fagged and jaded before the afternoon is half through; and as for going without breakfast altogether, shun, by all possible means, the adoption of such a course. Unless you have broken your fast, if only to the extent of a cup of *café au lait* and a slice of bread-and-butter, you will be in a vile temper all day long; and the world has been half ruined over and over again, through princes and potentates having gone without their breakfasts, and becoming in consequence testy, grumpy, aggressive, and bloodthirsty.

On the occasion in question, as it chanced, the exigence of business was of such a pressing nature, that we had to make up our minds to leave Brighton by the 8.45 train. We were so hurried that we had not even time for the *café au lait* and the slice of bread-and-butter; and even when we had submitted to that self-denying ordinance, it was only by two or three minutes or so that we contrived to catch the train for London Bridge.

What, then, was my delight, when, settling down somewhat sulkily, I am afraid, in the car for non-smokers—for a cigar in the early morning and fasting should be avoided—I descried in the adjoining saloon a number of little tables very daintily decked with spotless white table-cloths ; the whole most attractively suggestive of something to eat. With a modicum of nervous palpitation, I asked the obliging sleeping-car conductor what these snowy table-cloths might mean. He looked at me with a glance mildly expressive of astonishment. “Breakfast, sir,” he replied. “Breakfast! Where?” I interrogatively answered. “Why breakfast on board, sir,” quoth the conductor, making room, as he spoke, for a trimly-clad page to pass, who bore in his hand a tray, on which I thought I could discern something bearing a remarkable resemblance to buttered toast ; the verisimilitude of a boiled egg, and a third viand which had a surprisingly close likeness to a fried sole, well egged-and-breadcrumbed, and frizzling hot. Could we have broiled soles, boiled eggs, and buttered toast? Why, certainly. And broiled ham and eggs, or kidneys, or bloaters, or haddock? Assuredly. There was a bill of fare ; and there was no reason why we should not breakfast in ease and comfort. The which we presently proceeded to do ; and we were not charged any more for our meal than we should have had to pay had we breakfasted in the coffee-room of a well-conducted hotel. But what a simpleton the conductor may have thought me for asking him whether we could breakfast on board

the Pullman that particular morning! Had I been a stockbroker or a shipbroker, a merchant or a banker, or a city man of any kind, I should have known all about the Pullman breakfast train; but you see, that although for five-and-thirty years past I have earned the chief part of my livelihood in connection with a newspaper office in Fleet Street, E.C., I am not by any means "a party in the city."

For a quarter of a century, in fact, I have known scarcely anything about the regions beyond St. Paul's; and a few weeks since, having to dine at Vintners' Hall, my Jehu and I got hopelessly fogged and "clubbed" between Queen Victoria Street, E.C., and Cannon Street. We were worse belated in Eastcheap; and found ourselves at last on Tower Hill, whence we had to retrace our steps, or rather our wheels, to find Upper Thames Street. Now, the gentlemen who patronise the 8.45 A.M. Brighton and London Bridge train are, as a rule, affluent "parties in the city," who have residences at Brighton—irrespective, of course, of their town mansions in Allahabad Gardens, S.W., and their country seats in the Dukeries, or elsewhere,—and I must confess that I felt somewhat alarmed when I found myself surrounded by so many wealthy-looking persons, discussing their breakfasts with an affability which was quite charming, but which did not fail, for all that, to impress me tacitly though formidably with the conviction, that in all likelihood every one of their number was able to buy up my humble self, pecuniarily speaking, five hundred times over. Yet, here they were, quietly sipping their tea and

coffee, chipping their eggs, and munching their toast just like ordinary mortals !

Very possibly you have breakfasted on board a Pullman, and have come to consider that early morning meal, succulent, well served, and inexpensive, as something quite in the usual course of things. So, probably, you will consider it, if you are so fortunate as not yet to have attained middle age. Englishmen under forty-five are apt to be astonished at nothing. They take for granted a number of things that would have set Katterfelto's hair on end with wonder. Those things which their elders look upon as marvels, they regard with sublime equanimity as ordinary facilities of life, the provision of which they have a right to expect, and every hitch in the supply of which should be at once resented by indignant remonstrance in the shape of long letters of complaint addressed to the daily papers. All I can say is, that the conveniences of modern existence have become so numerous and so elaborate as to fill me, during most of my thinking hours, with unbounded surprise ; and, I assure you, that very often I feel, mentally speaking, inclined to pinch myself to ascertain whether I am really awake, or whether I am dreaming some Alnaschar vision of things that might be, but, as yet, are not.

You may think it a very slight matter that a number of ladies and gentlemen should be able to partake of a well-cooked, well-ordered breakfast on board a train progressing at a speed of some five-and-forty miles an hour ; but to me, that such a thing has been practicable

is simply marvellous, inasmuch as I very well remember, not only the period long anterior to Pullman cars, but a time when there was no railway from London to Brighton at all.

For some time past there has been a plethora in the publishing world of what I may call "coaching-books." The popularity of the Road Club, and the Four-in-Hand Club, and the many stage-coaches, driven either by private gentlemen or by professional "whips," which, during the summer, make long or short jaunts along the high-roads of England—which are assuredly the finest high-roads in the world—have naturally led to the putting forth of a multiplicity of books concerning coaching as it was carried on during the Regency, and up to the period of the accession of Queen Victoria. Some of these works contain the genuine reminiscences of elderly people, who have either horsed coaches on their own account, or who frequently travelled forty or fifty years ago by those conveyances ; while other productions of this nature are somewhat of a scissors-and-paste character, owing much of their interest to copious extracts from the writings of "Nimrod," the old files of *Bell's Life in London*, and copies from drawings by Harry Alken, Pyne, and Herring.

Now it is not my desire to be a Bore ; in fact, it has always been my most sedulous desire to avoid wearying the public. Consequently I will spare you any lengthened infliction of tediousness touching the old Brighton mail and stage-coaches—the "spanking tits" that drew them ; the scarlet-jerkined guards who

sounded their horns so sonorously; the box-seat which was so eagerly coveted; to say nothing of such notable drivers as Brackenbury, Goodman, and Sir Vincent Cotton, who, all baronet as he was, was not too proud at the conclusion of the journey, when the coach was setting down its passengers in Castle Square, Brighton, to give utterance to the traditional hint about "remembering the coachman," which remembrance invariably took the form of a *douceur* of half a crown.

Two maiden aunts of Sir Vincent once travelled with him, so the story went; and when the baronet, whose estates were at the time a little "dipped," touched his hat at the proper time, and politely expressed a hope that they would "remember the coachman," they tossed their heads and loftily replied, "That they knew the coachman's mother." To which Sir Vincent placidly but emphatically answered, "That he was very glad to hear the pleasing fact, but that they would be kind enough to remember the coachman all the same." But I must not be a bore. Away, memories of the "Times" coach, the "Age" and the "Royal Sovereign," the last of which, I think, was a vehicle of a white colour, and on the roof of which, hampers full of fish were habitually carried from Brighton to London.

The "fish-coach" had a tariff of fares slightly cheaper than those charged by the "Times" and the "Age," the merchandise which was carried imparting to it an odour that the proprietors sought to obviate by frequent repainting; but the combined perfume of coach-varnish


and fish was not found to be very gratifying to the olfactory organs of the passengers.

After all, admitting the marvellous characteristics of express-trains, excursion-trains, the electric telegraph, and all the other features of that scheme of railway construction, organisation, and development which were absolutely non-existent in my nonage, there are, to my mind, few things more wonderful than the economy of the railway commissariat, not only in the shape of breakfasting comfortably on board a Pullman, not only in the way of lunching or dining on board trains on the Midland, the Great Northern, and the London and North Western lines, but in divers phases, and under divers conditions on railway lines all over Europe and the United States. Wheresoever we travel, we find more extensive, more elaborate arrangements made for enabling passengers to refect themselves comfortably at their leisure, luxuriously, and without exorbitant charge. Already I have assisted at more than one semi-public luncheon on a railway train, and have made, or have listened to speeches at a hospitable board, racing along at express speed, and some of these days, perhaps, I shall be an invited guest to a wedding breakfast in a Pullman, or I shall have an invitation to a grand entertainment on board the "Wild Irishman," or the "Flying Dutchman," comprising a ball in one car, and a champagne supper in the other. We are rapidly tending, so it seems to me, in that direction.

ANY HOUR: FLATS

A GENTLEMAN wrote to the *Daily Graphic* not very long ago saying that, twenty years since, he left London for the Colonies, and that of all the changes he found on his return, the greatest was, perhaps, the modern Londoner's love of a flat. "They used to say," he continued, "an Englishman's house is his castle; and a good old-fashioned proverb it was in those days, when we looked down on the foreigner who preferred living under the same roof as a dozen others, to having a snug little house of his own in the suburbs. What is the cause of this change in the Englishman's way of living?" Now, I take it, that I should be altogether shirking my responsibilities, as one of the social photographers of "London Up to Date," if I did not essay to draw, to the best of my ability, a faithful picture of the London flat in its various and certainly interesting phases.

A few brief preliminary observations may be permitted to me. The gentleman who came home the other day from the Colonies, and expressed his astonishment at the growing popularity of residential flats, must be very well aware that twenty years ago there were practically sets of apartments in all the Inns of Court,



and in some such Inns of Chancery as New Inn, Clement's Inn, and Lyon's Inn, which were to all intents and purposes flats, inasmuch as each suite of rooms was cut off from the other suite, and was provided with an outer door, popularly known as "an oak," which could be sported or shut in the face of duns, bores, and importunate persons generally, by the tenant of the segregated suite, who could listen with a light heart to the most desperate tuggings at the bell of the outer oak, and smile a smile that was childlike and bland, when the baffled besiegers proceeded to thump the unyielding portal with the knobs of sticks or the handles of umbrellas, or to kick with heavy boots at the derisive panels. But we used to call those shut-off suites of rooms, chambers, and not flats.

Five-and-thirty years ago I shared with a friend a set of chambers in Clement's Inn, Strand. The suite consisted of a very comfortable parlour, an office, and a large bedroom. My friend slept there; but I only used the chambers for journalistic purposes, domiciled as I was at the time at a quaint old mansion in Bucks, called "Upton Court, near Slough." The Clement's Inn of the past was a very queer old place, approached by a sham classical portico, supported by frowning pillars, beneath which nestled among other small places of business, a barber's shop, kept by a worthy figaro, who yet carries on business in Fetter Lane, Fleet Street, and on whom I am always careful to call to be shaved for the sake of auld lang syne, when I find myself in the E.C. district.

Our chambers were in a courtyard, flanked by the Hall of the Inn, a dingy brick structure of the Georgian era, in the façade of which, over the porch, was a vertical sun-dial with a horizontal gnomon, and the inscription beneath "In Hoc Momento Pulsat Eternitas." Beyond there was another courtyard with a bit of green in the middle, and a hideous effigy of a blackamoor cast in lead. There was an isolated dwelling also in this court called the Garden House, which, I believe, was at one time in the occupation of my old friend, Mr. William Moy Thomas. The entire length of Clement's Inn towards the east was skirted by an unutterably filthy alley called Clement's Lane which was not very safe to travel through at night, and in which during the daytime you were apt to be greeted, by the juvenile occupants of the lane, with tributes of brickbats and the exhausted shells of whelks and cockles. I mention these little peculiarities for the reason that metropolitan improvements have had a great deal to do with Clement's Inn within recent years, and I daresay that, were I to visit this once familiar nook of London, I should scarcely know it again.

Hard by Clement's Inn, to the west, there is, as you are well aware, a pile of very eligible and comfortable residential flats—only these were also called chambers in my time—known by the name of Danes' Inn. These chambers never had anything to do with the law ; they were simply erected by an enterprising builder on the site of the Angel Inn, a very antique hostelry with wooden balconies running round its inner court, which

I remember as doing a very fair business in the year 1845. Then, too, were chambers to be obtained in Lyon's Inn, long since demolished, on the site of which stands the present Globe Theatre. Extending my recollections farther northwards, I find that about 1863 I must have been using for business purposes, a suite of chambers in Gray's Inn, or rather in Verulam Buildings, the portion of the Inn which borders Gray's Inn Lane. The rent of these chambers was ridiculously low,—to be sure they were very grimy and of a slightly ramshackle condition.

Then, leaving the north for the east again, it returns to me that when I was quite a small boy, close upon half a century since, I used frequently to visit a dear friend of our family, a young Irish barrister, who had residential chambers in Pump Court, Temple. I need scarcely say, that the installation of all the suites of rooms I have named was of the simplest and not of the most comfortable description. None of them had bathrooms, and primary sanitary arrangements were conspicuous by their absence. In a few, there might be an apology for a kitchen—that is to say, there was a polygonal den, dark and dismal, in which the "laundress" or glorified charwoman, who "did" for future judges and Q.C.'s, would cook a frugal breakfast for her employers; but when repasts of a more luxurious nature, of which you will find pleasant little sketches scattered through Thackeray's novels and essays, were required, the banquet had to be sent for from some hotel in Fleet Street.

At this period, not all the inmates of the Middle or Inner Temple, or, indeed, of the smaller Inns of Chancery,

were bachelors. In Clement's Inn, our neighbours, on the same floor, were a gentleman who had something to do with Natural History, and his wife, a French lady, who was the proud possessor of two prodigious white French poodles, which she was continually putting through manual exercise in the court; and either in the Middle or the Inner Temple resided, you will remember, the horrible Sloans, husband and wife, who were prosecuted and imprisoned for their abominable treatment of their servant-girl.

I am not Harlequin; yet, I have in some shape or another a bat, and wielding that wand I proceed to call up a transformation scene, the aspect of which astonishes me quite as forcibly as it seems to have done the gentleman who returned to England, home, and beauty, after twenty years' residence in the Colonies. All over western, south-western, and north-western London, huge mansions are rising up in the shape of residential flats. I have occupied one in Screech Owl Street, S.W., during the last five years. Here it is! Large, well-erected house—I have never cared to inquire how many storeys high—without the slightest suspicion of jerry-building about it. When I first went to live there the mansion was destitute of a lift; but that convenience has since been added to it, and the landlord carefully popped on ten pounds additional to the rent, as a solatium for the concession of the elevator.

Our flat is on the third floor. Unhappily there is no outer oak to be sported as is the present case in Inns of Court Chambers. I am destitute of any cunning

arrangement of lenses, by means of which I can reconnoitre the person outside, and determine whether he is a dun or a bore, or some other equally objectionable individual, and I have forgotten, too, to provide the inside of the door with a chain attached to the lock, so as to be able to open the portal about only a couple of inches, and ascertain whether the visitor belongs, as the Spaniards have it, to "the party of war, or the party of peace." The consequence is, that when the bell has been rung four or five times, we feel in prudence bound to have the door opened, lest the caller should be somebody bearing a *pâté de foie gras*, or a piece of plate, or a bouquet, or a complimentary cheque, or something nice of that kind ; but, in the case of the person ringing belonging not to the *gente de paz*, but to the *gente de guerra*, and having hostile and not pacific intentions, he is able to come down upon us precisely as of old the Assyrians came down on the fold ; that is to say, like a wolf. He is in the entrance hall before you can say Jack Robinson. The dining-room is on the left ; he may look to my luncheon, if he have a mind that way, in a jiffy. Next door to the lift is my private office, and if I have inadvertently left my keys in the lock of my Chatwood fire and burglar proof safe, the Assyrian, I mean the wolf, will find at his mercy my ledger and my cash book, my cheque book—account long since overdrawn, ha, ha !—and all my fully paid-up shares in the Hand-In-Your-Pocket Gold Mining Reef, and the Old Atrocity Cinnabar Mines of Tea - Potty - Wotty, New Zealand. Luckily, those securities are no longer

convertible into cash, both mining undertakings having long since been the prey of hideous ruin, and combustion dire.

If the wolf Assyrian—who after all may be only the bearer of a letter of introduction from a friend abroad or in the Colonies, who sends you, with his warmest recommendations, some exceptionally clever young gentleman, for whom he thinks you will at once be able to procure an appointment under Government, or on the staff of the *Times* newspaper—pursue his way along a narrow corridor he will readily gain admission into my study and my drawing-room, and then, making a short detour to the right, he will come to a bath-room, a large bedroom, and a smaller one. That is all. Stay! The kitchen and pantry are at the right hand of the entrance hall, and for four servants there is only one bedroom, so I am obliged to colonise one of them out, by taking a lodging for him in the neighbourhood.

Altogether, including kitchen and bath-room, we have nine moderately-sized rooms at our disposal. The front rooms look on to Screech Owl Street, and are light enough; the back rooms are somewhat dark, not through any fault of our landlord, but because there rises in the rear of us another gigantic block of residential flats, brand-new ones. For, when I first came thither, there was at the back a grimy old Bridewell, or House of Correction, or prison of some sort. When this gaol was pulled down a very large tract of ground was left unoccupied, and might have been appropriately converted into a public recreation ground; but no such

luck. A Panorama Company hired the land, and erected upon it an enormous building of galvanised iron for the exhibition of a panorama of the Battle of Waterloo. The exhibition was not a success, and I can always remember it, since from six to eight o'clock, during the many months occupied in erecting it, I rarely got a wink of sleep, so constant and so distracting were the noises of the hammering of rivets, and the dumping down of huge sheets of metal. After the panorama had collapsed they began to build the gigantic flats of which I have spoken, and again for months and months I was deprived of my morning rest by the noise made by the carpenters and bricklayers, and the hideous whirr of circular saws. But cruel Fate has decreed that, just as we are about to vacate our flat for a few months, peace reigns, and all noises without have ceased.

It cost me a pretty penny to get into this highly eligible flat. I was a widower when I went there, and therefore needed no boudoir drawing-room, but I wanted a long gallery for the bookcases holding what I call my "swell books"; that is to say, the rare ones, the editions *de luxe* and the triumphs of bookbinding which I possess; to say nothing of some pictures and bronzes and porcelain and other bric-à-brac. So, with the permission of the landlord, I had an arch cut between one room and another, and draped it with tapestry curtains, which could be closed if required. Altogether, what with taking away an old, elaborate, and dreadfully rusty bath apparatus and substituting a bath up to date for it; what with money paid to the builder, and the

upholsterers, and the roller-blind makers ; what with cutting up large carpets to lay down in small rooms, looking to the gas installation, selling old articles of furniture at a loss and buying new ones ; what with buying innumerable yards of brass rods for hanging pictures and prints on, and especially what with paying the workmen's time during the weeks upon weeks they were occupied in my nine rooms ; and, finally, what with the payment of eighty pounds to the obliging firm who moved my books and curios without so much as losing a volume or breaking a teacup, I found that it cost me close upon a thousand pounds to become the occupant of the flat in question, at a rental of two hundred and ten pounds a year, plus ten pounds additional for the use of the lift, and plus, at the present, another twelve pounds per annum for the rent of the lodgings of the servant who sleeps out.

Now I came to Screech Owl Street from Mecklenburg Square, W.C., a large roomy house of twelve rooms. I could have entertained five-and-twenty guests in the dining-room, and given a ball to a hundred and fifty in the two drawing-rooms. In a back bedroom on the second floor I could find room for three thousand books, and altogether, when I left, I could comfortably house ten thousand volumes. Since that period, of course, I have bought many more books, but there is absolutely no room in the nine handsome cupboards in Screech Owl Street for anything else of any nature whatsoever — furniture, books, curios, or bronzes.

Finally, in justice, let this picture of a strictly up-to-date flat be completed with one more observation. It cannot be denied that flats are cosy in winter time; and perhaps no more comfortable dwelling than a handsome flat could be devised for the home of a young married couple devoted to society, who are constantly out and about at balls, dinners, and receptions, and entertain very little at home. And again for a bachelor, his valet and housekeeper, a flat is a very comfortable domicile; but for large families, or busy people, whose business in life has to be carried on entirely at home, I contend that a house is a far more advantageous dwelling, as well as infinitely more comfortable than a flat.


P.S.—Since writing the above the lease of my flat in Screech Owl Street has expired, and I have moved books, bric-à-brac, and all to Brighton.

TRAVELS IN REGENT STREET

PART I

I WISH that Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, or some equally industrious and appreciative commentator on what may be termed "the London of Charles Dickens," would devote a special chapter to Regent Street in connection with the frequent mention made of that unique thoroughfare in the writings of the illustrious novelist. It may be that the task which I suggest has been already accomplished; but if such be the case, it has escaped my notice. I have very little time to read new books, and not half time enough to read old ones.

So far as my memory serves me, there is no allusion whatsoever to Regent Street in *Pickwick*; but *Nicholas Nickleby* is absolutely redolent of the street in question and its immediate vicinity. Ralph Nickleby lived in Golden Square; and the interesting family of the Kenwigses, with Newman Noggs and the selfish Mr. Crowl, resided in what Dickens calls "a bygone, faded, tumble-down street, with two irregular rows of tall meagre houses" close to the Square. The millinery



and dressmaking establishment of Madame Mantalini, if not actually in Regent Street, was as nigh to that thoroughfare as it was to Cavendish Square; but it was in Regent Street itself that Lord Frederick Verisopht and Sir Mulberry Hawk occupied apartments, and sat down to breakfast at three o'clock in the afternoon, after a riotous night spent, possibly, at the "Pie," or at "Bob Croft's," in the Haymarket.

I have a peculiar partiality for the Regent Street of Dickens's early novels, for the reason, probably, that as a child I was living there, off and on, between 1836 and 1841; and that, again, as a big boy, I resided there in 1845. In the first year mentioned, we lived high up the street nearly opposite Verrey's, then, as now, a first-rate *café* and restaurant. Later, we were tenants of a first floor over a great drapery establishment, Hitchcock's by name—on the site of whose premises is now the emporium of Messrs. Nicol, merchant tailors, of "registered paletôt" renown. Then we occupied a first floor at a stationer's shop opposite Swan and Edgar's; and at the stationer's I remember seeing the first batch of cheap postage stamps that were issued. Finally, my latest remembrance of Regent Street as a dwelling-place is in association with an entresol, in which we lived for a short time at the time of the railway mania. The proprietor of the shop beneath was an old gentleman named Tucker, who was a naturalist and bird-stuffer; and, with the exception of the bedrooms occupied by himself and his daughter and servant at the top of the

house, and our own entresol, I should say that every apartment and every nook and cranny in that Regent Street messuage and tenement were crowded as full as they could hold with the skins of birds awaiting their turn to be stuffed. The ostriches and rocs, the dodos and moas, were kept, I suppose, in the cellar.

But it is to Dickens's Regent Street that my mind most frequently reverts. Although Ralph Nickleby, and Sir Mulberry Hawk, the Kenwigses and Newman Noggs may all be imaginary characters, I can remember hearing of real flesh-and-blood usurers, and titled dandies, and profligate baronets of the period, who might well have sat to Dickens for their portraits. My mother knew very well a youthful gentleman-about-town, who was the very "fetch" or "double" of Lord Frederick Verisopht; and all the episodes of West-End life which Dickens has sketched with such wonderfully graphic force—Madame Mantalini's show-room, Golden Square, and the slums round about it, and especially the bearded, swarthy foreigners who used to hang about the Opera Colonnade and the Opera Box office late in the afternoon in the season, all remind me of once living types familiar to me in my childhood. By the way, touching those same swarthy, bearded, foreign saunterers, I should like the fortunate possessors of first editions of Dickens to tell me whether there has not been a slight alteration in the text of the later issues.

It is a sufficiently curious circumstance that until

quite lately it happened that, save a pirated American copy of *Oliver Twist*, with George Cruikshank's etchings vilely forged, which I picked up many years ago in New York, I did not possess a single volume of Dickens's works; but having occasion to verify some imperfectly remembered passage in *Little Dorrit*, not for my own use, but for that of one of my numerous correspondents, and knowing that there are Dickensians who are as exactly versed in every line of the author's text as Shakespearians are in that of the Bard of All Time, I thought that it would be best to avoid being hauled over the coals for inaccuracy, if I were to supplement my library at Brighton by a complete set of Dickens. So, before replying to my unknown correspondent, I sent for the series in seventeen volumes; the edition which has an Imperial crown on the cover.

In Chapter the Second of *Nickleby* I read that "the dark-complexioned men who wear large rings and heavy watch-guards and bushy whiskers, and who congregate under the Opera Colonnade and about the box office in the season between four and five in the afternoon, *when they give away the orders*, all live in Golden Square or within a street of it." It would be as well if the scholiasts on Dickens carefully noted the whole of this paragraph, since, in a few weeks' time, there will be no Opera Colonnade in existence at all. But it is in another part of this passage that I am interested. Trusting entirely to my memory, I think that there were, about 1836, two opera-box offices, one under the Colonnade, and the other at the south-eastern corner of

a little street—I should say Carlton Street,—the darkling shops on one side of which were shrouded by a colonnade leading to St. Alban's Place. This second box office, which was also a print-shop and a music warehouse, was kept by a then very well-known London tradesman called Nugent; and what I am anxious that the owners of first editions of Dickens should tell me is, whether the original text does not run, "Between four and five in the afternoon, when *Mr. Nugent gives away the orders.*" If I am right, it would be curious to ascertain why Mr. Nugent's name fell out, or whether it was purposely excised from the text?

From that which I have hinted at the head of this chapter, it will be sufficiently plain to my readers that I have known Regent Street at its brightest on a great many afternoons during a great many years. Whenever I go to town I do not fail to have a peep at Regent Street, the beloved, and usually find it, at 4 P.M., as bright as ever, whether in or out of the fashionable season. The "Rue de la Paix of London" was densely crowded on my last visit in August, and shopping seemed to be going on in the briskest way imaginable. When I got back to London-super-Mare, I fell into a brown study about Regent Street, and began to consult a book bearing very closely on Nash's architectural masterpiece; but the volume, the pages of which I was very carefully conning, was neither Cassell's *Old and New London*, nor Wheatley's extension of Peter Cunningham's *Handbook*. Upon my word, it was Kelly's *Post-Office London Directory*, for the year 1894; and what would not I have given for a copy

of the Great Red Book for 1836, in order that I might find therein a schedule of the shops which flourished in Regent Street four-and-fifty years ago!

As it is, running my eye up and down the seven columns devoted to Regent Street in the "Up-to-Date" Directory, it strikes me that in 1836-37 Howell and James's were flourishing as silk mercers and jewellers. St. Philip's Church, of course, stands where it stood in my boyhood; but York House, which I first remember as a residential mansion, called Club Chambers, is now the Junior Army and Navy Stores. Capper and Waters, shirtmakers?—Yes, I fancy, were Regent Street acquaintances of my childhood. Swan and Edgar, of course, belonged to my remotest past. The great firm is now converted into a Limited Company; but I remember when there was a real Swan and a real Edgar, who enjoyed well-deserved consideration for the liberality with which they treated their employés, male and female; and I have a distinct remembrance of hearing one summer evening, when all the windows were open, the enthusiastic cheering issuing from an apartment over the way, after a dinner at which the firm had entertained their assistants. Sandland and Crane, hosiers, very ancient acquaintances. Gaffin and Co., sculptors, close to Air Street. Yes; there was a sculpture gallery here in 1836-37, but I think the then proprietor had an Italian name, and the stock-in-trade was mainly composed of alabaster statuettes and vases. I mind the place well, for gazing one day at the statuary in the window, in company with a beloved sister, there

came up to us a friend of the family, one Mr. Thomas Fitzherbert, who told us that William IV. was dead.

Field and Co., booksellers and stationers. My mind runneth not to the contrary of there being such a shop at the north-east corner of Air Street, next to the sculpture gallery. I knew the original Field personally. St. James's Hall and Restaurant are comparatively modern acquaintances, but Charles Godfrey Hall, Pan-nuscorium boot and shoe repository, has been known to me very many years; although I am unable precisely to associate the name with the Regent Street of Dickens. At the corner of Vigo Street there used to be in "Nickleby" days a great hatter's shop, kept by a Mr. Johnson. The hatter's which has now given place to some other *magasin* is deeply cut in my tablets of memories, inasmuch as Mrs. Johnson, wife of the proprietor of the warehouse at the corner of Vigo Street, kept a school in Golden Square, at which my sister was a weekly boarder. On the other side of Vigo Street, the Scotch warehouse of Scott and Aidie has been there, under some North British name or another, ever since I can remember anything.

I am not so certain about Farmer and Rogers', the Indian warehouse; although the firm are, I should say, ancient denizens of the street; but five decades ago the Indian warehouse of my predilection was Holmes's, much farther up towards Oxford Street. At Holmes's nothing was sold but Cashmere shawls of the most expensive kinds, and with these shawls the shop window was most picturesquely draped; the only other decora-

tion being a huge vase of Oriental porcelain, standing perhaps some four feet and a half high. I have in my entrance hall precisely such a vase. I bought it many years ago, slightly cracked, as a "bargain," and when I look upon it I never fail to associate it with Holmes's great Cashmere shawl shop in Regent Street. Does anybody give a hundred and fifty guineas for a Cashmere shawl nowadays; do any ladies up to date wear a Cashmere, unless, indeed, they are fortunate recipients of the shawls which Her Majesty receives as an annual tribute from the Rajah of Cashmere, and graciously confers at fashionable weddings on brides whom she delights to honour?

A. Newman and Co., job and postmasters. I know nothing about the present firm, but Newman's in the days of William IV. I knew very well. We lived opposite; and from an upper window one morning, I saw depart from Newman's a yellow post-chaise drawn by two grey horses. There were two gentlemen in the chaise, one of whom carried a shallow oblong case covered with dark shagreen. That post-chaise had nothing to do with an elopement, or a wedding breakfast, or a setting forth on a honeymoon—it was a chariot of death. I learned afterwards that the two gentlemen drove from Regent Street to Wimbledon, there to meet three other gentlemen, one of whom belonged to the medical profession. The party, in fact, consisted of two principals, two seconds, and a surgeon; and a duel was fought, and one of the gentlemen who had left Newman's that morning in the post-chaise was shot to death.

11

How many years, I wonder, has Duvelleroy's fan warehouse flourished in Regent Street, at the corner of New Burlington Street? I have no memory of the time when this portion of the thoroughfare was without its emporium of highly artistic fans; but the existing M. Jules Duvelleroy must be the son or the grandson of the ingenious French fan manufacturer, who established in London a branch of his Paris business. In the Passage des Panoramas, hard by the Rue Vivienne, there is a Duvelleroy, in whose windows, long years ago, I have often admiringly gazed at fans painted by such renowned artists as Gavarni, Eugène Lamy, Gustave de Beaumont, and "Cham"; and Waugh and Co., chemists and druggists, take me back for more than half a century. Also Aubert and Klastenberger, watch-makers, are the oldest of old acquaintances. Was there not in the bygone a little mechanical figure of a bird here, with jewelled breast, beak, eyes, and claws, which, on being wound up, used to flap its wings and warble delightful melody?—the warbling, I apprehend, being produced by a small bird-organ in the interior of Dicky.

Quite as old an ally is Carlin, cigar importer; but I cannot remember when he first brought the fragrant weed to Regent Street. As for Ackermann, print publisher, he has been here ever since 1836, and very possibly an Ackermann came hither before I was born. The present Ackermann must be a grandson of rugged old Rudolf Ackermann, the large-minded, strong-willed, persevering German, whose great art-warehouse was at

the corner of Beaufort Buildings, Strand, where now is Rimmel's, the perfumer's. Three of Rudolf Ackermann's sons continued for many years the business in the Strand, and they were among my very earliest employers, when I was a bit of a painter, and a bit of a lithographer, and a bit of an engraver, and a bit of a "duffer" at all three crafts between the years 1847 and 1852. The good old firm in the Strand faded to extinction some three decades ago, and shops have come and shops have vanished in Regent Street during two generations; but the Regent Street Ackermann exhibits no signs of migration, and, humanly speaking, may go on for ever.

It is precisely the same with Cramer's music warehouse at the corner of Conduit Street. The Post-Office Directory calls the house J. B. Cramer and Co., and classes the firm as musical instrument makers—an announcement which at once carries my mind right across the British Channel to Ostend, in Belgium, and so by way of Brussels, to a certain Field where, on the 18th of June 1815, there was fought a battle of giants, the French Titans being led by one Napoleon Bonaparte, the English by a certain Arthur Wellesley, who, before sunset, managed to rout his tremendous foe, and, in figurative language, more popular than elegant, to "knock him into a cocked hat." Now, on the Field of Waterloo, there is a very pleasant little hotel, the landlady of which is an Englishwoman, and adjoining is a most curious collection of Waterloo relics originally formed by her ancestor, Sergeant-Major Cotton, who fought in the battle, and for many years afterwards officiated as a

guide to the Field. He founded the little Waterloo Museum, and among the inexpressibly interesting mementoes there gathered together, which at different periods have been picked up on the plateau of Mont St. Jean and thereabouts, I remember seeing an instrument of military music—a bugle or a trumpet, I cannot exactly remember which—incribed with the maker's name, "J. B. Cramer." That may have been the eminent instrumentalist, Johann Baptist Cramer, who, born in 1771, must have been some forty-four years of age in the Waterloo year. It was not, however, till 1828 that he established the firm of J. B. Cramer and Co. in Regent Street, and in that same year your humble servant took the liberty of coming into the world. I shall have something more to say afterwards on the famous house of Cramer.

FOUR P.M.: REGENT STREET

PART II

MEMORY plays us strange tricks sometimes; and the inability to remember a certain thing or event, or the name of a particular person, has sometimes an exasperating effect on people with hasty tempers. "Sir," exclaimed an excited member of some State Legislature in America, "I have a great respect for that Chair. I honour, I venerate that Chair; but if I am again insulted, overruled, or called to order, I will kick that Chair and pull its nose." That is what I felt vastly inclined to do to my own memory when it obstinately refused to tell me the exact whereabouts on the western side of Regent Street, and, in the last years of William IV., of a bookseller's shop kept by a worthy Scotchman named Fraser, who founded the exceedingly able Conservative monthly magazine, with which his name was for so many years associated.

Fraser's was the London *Blackwood*, as able, as vigorous, and as amusingly abusive when dealing with people whose persons, or whose politics it did not

approve, as the famous *Ebony* of Edinburgh used to be. In the room above the shop, Mr. Fraser used periodically to entertain his staff at supper. What a staff! Daniel Maclise, R.A., who, under the *nom de guerre* of "Alfred Croquis," had etched the sparkling little outline caricature portraits of contemporary celebrities in *Fraser*, produced a wonderfully graphic group of the "Fraserians" as they appeared in convivial council assembled, some five-and-fifty years ago. What a staff, I repeat. Carlyle, very much to the fore, Harrison Ainsworth, James Hogg, John Gibson Lockhart, Theodore Hook; Thackeray looming large in the distance; Dr. William Maginn, previously the "Morgan O'Doherty" of *Blackwood*, vigorously in evidence at Fraser's hospitable board. Maginn, a man of vast learning and of great wit and humour, but whose writings seem to be almost entirely forgotten by the present generation—it might surely be worth the while of some booksellers to republish the *Homeric Ballads*,—will always in my mind be associated with that shop in Regent Street.

He had written in *Fraser* a scathing critique on a novel of which the author was the Hon. Grantley Berkeley, a well-known sportsman, and brother of a too well-known nobleman, Lord Fitzhardinge. Mr. Grantley Berkeley being a Liberal, he was, naturally, according to the truculent literary custom of the time, fiercely "pitched into" by the Tory reviewer. The vilipended author thought that the article was not only politically unjust, but that it contained unwarrantable aspersions on a lady of his family. He had not at the time at his

disposal the columns of any Liberal journal, in which he could "pitch into" his Conservative foe; but he had a horse-whip, and, armed with that instrument of chastisement, he went, accompanied by his brother, Mr. Craven Berkeley, to Mr. Fraser's shop, in Regent Street. He had an interview with the luckless publisher, who declined to give up the name of the writer of the obnoxious criticism; whereupon, the incensed and noble novelist thrashed Mr. Fraser "to a mummy," as the saying goes. Dr. Maginn lost no time in revealing himself as the author of the review in question, and again following the barbarous custom of the epoch, he challenged Mr. Grantley Berkeley, or was challenged by him, to mortal combat.

The antagonists met, and after exchanging two or three shots, "honour" was assumed to be "satisfied." I fail to see, however, that poor Mr. Fraser got much satisfaction for the beating which he received. It is true that he brought an action for assault and battery against Mr. Grantley Berkeley. He got a verdict and moderate damages, but he was never the same man that he had been before his unmerciful thrashing, and died in middle-age. The Fraser-Maginn-Berkeley incident has always appeared to me as one of the strongest arguments that could be brought forward in favour of reviews and criticisms, both literary and artistic, being signed by the writers thereof, although I am as strongly of opinion that in leading articles in newspapers the anonymous should be strictly maintained. The writer of a "leader" is only part of a very

complex machine. There may be a dozen persons behind him, who, vulgarly speaking, have had a finger in the pie, in suggesting the subject of the article, or pointing out the lines on which it should be constructed, or in altering or modifying it, if it be editorially thought too strong. That is why it seems to me most appropriate that the writer of the leader should speak in the first person plural and not in the first person singular. It is not so with literary or artistic criticisms; and it should be "I" and not "we" who should be responsible for saying that Mr. Twopenny, the novelist, is a donkey, and Mr. Rapodie, the poet, an idiot, or that Mr. Spoof, R.A., is only able to paint what Mr. Rudyard Kipling gracefully calls "smeared things." And please to observe that Mr. Kipling, when he does give anybody "fits," signs his name to his strictures. Stay; upon my word here is a glimpse of returning memory. After Mr. Fraser's death, was not the bookselling business in Regent Street carried on by a Mr. Bosworth? Be it as it may, I find no Bosworth in the Regent Street "Up to Date."

The modern aspects of the west side of the street are worth glancing at. I find installed there the offices of a sewing-machine company, a coffee palace, and a branch post and telegraph office, where you can obtain money orders, and where there is besides a savings bank, and an annuity and insurance office. Don't sneer at this information as a trite truism. There was no post-office in the Regent Street of my childhood; there were no telegraphs, no Post-Office Savings Banks, and

no means afforded by the beneficent St. Martin's-le-Grand for insurance, annuities, or investments in Consols. There were no sewing machines and no coffee palaces. When I think of the immense deficiencies in our civilisation half a century ago, I sometimes wonder how, in the præ-Victorian era, we managed to eat, drink, and sleep in comfort; to make love and get married or jilted; to transact our business and make money, or lose it. Still, we somehow contrived to accomplish all these things, just as when we turn over the *Pepys's Diary*, we find that men, women, and children with deficiencies in civilisation far greater than which existed half a century since, seem to have got along, on the whole, as comfortably as we do now, and as two thousand years ago humanity got on at Herculaneum and Pompeii.

I pass frowning old Hanover Chapel, which is said, in the guide-books, to be an edifice of the Ionic order, and in its internal arrangements somewhat to resemble St. Stephen's, Walbrook. I only mention this, to me, uninteresting pile for two reasons. First, because Hanover Chapel will, in all probability, speedily be swept away, and replaced by some secular building; and next, because the portico used, when I was young, to be haunted by Italian image boys, a race who appear to me to have almost entirely vanished from the Metropolis. They were wont to loiter on week-days under the columns of the portico, and rest their burdens on the pedestals. When did you last make acquaintance with the peripatetic youth with swarthy complexion

and flashing black eyes, bearing on his head a board crowded with plaster-of-Paris effigies of the Venus of Milo, the Huntress Diana, the Triumphal Augustus, Canova's Three Graces, the Dying Gladiator, Shakespeare, the Great Duke of Wellington, and last, but not least, Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria?

I used to haunt the portico of the Chapel when I was a boy of fourteen, and at an English school at Turnham Green; and my visits to the Italian image boys were for the purpose of purchasing plaster casts of antique medals and *alti rilievi*, which they sold for a penny and twopence each. My school was to a great many intents a technical one; that is to say, we tried our hands at a great many crafts and were masters, perchance, of none; but surely it was the most amusing school that ever a boy was so fortunate as to attend. Among other helps to technical knowledge, we had a chemical laboratory; and returning to Turnham Green with a good stock of plaster medals, the first thing that I did with them was to build a little wall of paper round each medal and pour hot wax over it. When the waxen impression was cold, powdered black lead was carefully brushed over it; and then the medals were taken in hand by a scientific boy, who experimented on them from an electro-metallurgic point of view. Whether he ever succeeded in obtaining a bronze reproduction of any one of the medals from which I had taken the waxen impressions I cannot remember, but I know that on experimental afternoon the scientific boy was wont to levy a forced loan of pence and ha'pence from us, for

the purpose of their conversion into bronze; and as he was a very big boy, painfully expert in the administration of "back-handers," there was no saying nay to his sometimes inconveniently pressing demands for coppers. How it was that an oxyhydrogen lamp came into these experiments I cannot tell; but the general results of our essays in the laboratory were, that we usually contrived to burn holes in our handkerchiefs and in our cuffs with strong acids; to stain our fingers all the colours of the rainbow; and occasionally to fight for possession of a bottle of chemicals, the fracture of which brought us to great scholastic grief.

I have done for the nonce with the west side of Regent Street, although, ere I cross to the east, I may just say one word about the Art Studio of Mr. Van Hier, an artist who produces surprisingly attractive paintings of landscape and marine effects, and who, as a teacher, may be congratulated, I should say, on having guided the studies of a very large number of ladies and gentlemen with a taste for art.

The first building which attracts me on the eastern side of Regent Street, is a shop at the corner of Little Argyll Street. Here once stood the Argyll Rooms, originally established for ball and concert-giving purposes, under the auspices of Colonel Greville. This was during the Regency. In 1818 the rooms were rebuilt in very comely style by the notable street architect, Nash; and here, in 1829, the famous male soprano singer, Velluti, gave a grand concert which I have reason to know was crowded by nearly all the nobility and

gentry of the period. My mother has often told me about the Regent Street Argyll Rooms. She was Velluti's favourite pupil, and presided at the pianoforte at his Academy for teaching Italian singing. Whether the Academy itself was held at the Argyll I am not certain. The building was burnt down in 1830, and during the conflagration considerable damage was done to the extensive premises known as the "Harmonic Institution" of Messrs. Welsh and Hawes.

Of Mr. Hawes, I have no personal remembrance, but I fancy that he was the father of a well-known English singer, Miss Maria B. Hawes. On the other hand, his partner, "Tom" Welsh, as he was usually called, was an old and intimate friend of our family. He had had something to do with music all his life, and also with art, for he was the munificent patron of a gifted artist named Harlowe, the painter of that admirable picture, "The Trial of Queen Katharine," in which there are portraits of the whole Kemble family,—corpulent Stephen Kemble (who could play Falstaff without stuffing) as King Henry; Charles Kemble as Cromwell; John Kemble as Cardinal Wolsey, and the divine Sarah Siddons as the Queen. Unless I am mistaken, among the ladies in the foreground there is a portrait of "Kitty" Stephens, afterwards Countess of Essex. Mr. "Tom" Welsh was one of the last of English musical instructors who took apprentices, or rather artied pupils, of both sexes.

Sir George Smart, whom Tom Ingoldsby described as playing a "consarto" with "four-and-twenty fiddlers

all on a row," at the Queen's Coronation was another "Mus. Doc.," who took harmonious apprentices, and the worthy knight, with his German rival, were divertingly if somewhat spitefully caricatured in Thackeray's novellette, *The Ravenswing*. As for the photographers in Regent Street "up to date," their name is not exactly legion; but they are marvellously numerous. Walery, Lock and Whitfield, Van der Weyde, "and a lot more," as the actor with an imperfect memory concluded his enumeration of the Decemvirs in the play of *Virginus*: "Julius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate, and a lot more."

I have always thought it to be entirely within the fitness of things that photographers should abound in Regent Street. Ever so many years ago, far down the street, on the east side, was the Daguerreotype Gallery of M. Claudet, a worthy old French gentleman, who flourished as late as the Paris Exhibition of 1867; and in the window of an optician's shop on the west side, close to what is now the establishment of the London Stereoscopic Company, I saw the first photograph on paper that ever greeted my eyes. It was a transcript of a bookcase—the books rendered with that which was then considered to be almost microscopic minuteness of detail; and the photograph, I believe, was one of the earliest emanations from the process simultaneously invented by the Englishman, Fox Talbot, and the Frenchman, Niepce de St. Victor. If that copy of the sun-picture be extant, it must be worth, I should say, a great deal of money.

Madame Elise and Co., Limited, Court Dressmakers

and Milliners by Special Appointment to Royalty, always presents a curious interest to me. Not that I want any bonnets, or feel inclined to encourage the purchase by my Partner of any such article at a higher price than sixteen shillings and sixpence—she is quite at liberty to supplement this normal sum by two or three pounds of her own,—but because I knew very well Madame Elise's predecessor, a lady named Jane Clarke, who acquired a large fortune by dealing in old point lace. She was passionately fond of this fascinating fabric, and I have heard that in her will she directed that she should be buried in point lace. Jane Clarke was also an enlightened patroness of art, and brought together a choice collection of valuable paintings.

There is only one other shop on the west side, to which I shall call attention in this penultimate section of travels in Regent Street. I daresay that I spoke of the shop in question—Lechertier-Barbe, artist's colourmen—in a book called *Twice Round the Clock*; but I have not a copy of the book by me, and you will be so good as to remember that I wrote it some five-and-thirty years ago. If I did at that period mention Lechertier-Barbe, I must have spoken of it even then as a very old-established artist's colour shop, indeed,—as old, perhaps, as Windsor and Newton in Rathbone Place, although perhaps junior of the historic Newman and the equally antique Reeve. As a matter of fact, I have a distinct recollection of the house of Barbe if not of Lechertier in its actual home in Regent Street, close to the County Fire Office, so long ago as the month of

August 1833. On the 28th of July in the same year, an attempt was made by a Corsican miscreant, named Giuseppe Fieschi, to destroy King Louis Philippe by means of an infernal machine, which the would-be regicide fired from a window of the upper storey of a house in the Faubourg du Temple, Paris. The King escaped ; but the brave Marshal Mortier was slain, and a large number of equally innocent people were killed or wounded. Fieschi, himself, was badly hurt by the explosion of some of the musket-barrels, which, placed in a row, formed his murderous engine. A little waxen effigy of him, the face encircled by blood-stained bandages, was made in Paris, and copies were sent to this country. There was one in Barbe's shop window. I used, as a child, to stare at it intently almost every day ; and, if my hand were not stiff, I could make a sketch of that little waxen image now.

TRAVELS IN REGENT STREET

PART III

IF these fugitive essays on one of the most celebrated and the most interesting streets in the civilised world had the slightest pretensions to be considered a History of Regent Street, the third part of my travels which I now present to you would be more appropriately entitled an "excursus," which is the name which the learned Professor Becker, the author of those wonderful pictures of ancient Greek and Roman society *Chariades* and *Gallus*, gives to the equally entertaining and instructive digressions on particular items of antique civilisation which he occasionally finds necessary to interpolate in his narrative. The present "excursus" may be neither entertaining nor instructive; still, I am compelled to digress in consequence of the amazing number of letters in connection with Regent Street which have reached me since the publication in serial form of my two former essays. It will be only courtesy upon my part to acknowledge their kind communications in this my third essay upon, to me, the most interesting street in London.

First, let me say something about that alteration in the text of *Nicholas Nickleby* to which I alluded in a former essay. It appears, so at least a hundred correspondents have been good enough to tell me, that the original text runs thus : "The dark-complexioned men who wear large rings, and heavy watch-guards, and bushy whiskers, and who congregate about the Opera Colonnade, and about the box office in the season, between four and five in the afternoon, when Mr. Seguin gives away the orders—all live in Golden Square, or within a street of it." Of course, it was Mr. Seguin. He starts up like a jack-in-the-box, or rather he tumbles out of some dusty pigeon-hole of my memory.

Seguin was a musical party, and I should properly have remembered him as distinctly as I do the contemporary musical names of Mori, Lavenu, Bochsa, and Mapleson. The last was the father of the well-known and genial *impresario*, Colonel James Mapleson.

But how on earth did the name of Nugent occur to me? Nugent, phonetically, is not in the slightest degree suggestive of Seguin. The only possible way in which I can account for this aberration of memory on my part is to infer that Mr. Seguin may have had a successor by the name of Nugent. Collectors of old Post-Office Directories could set me right in this respect; and, by the way, another of my multitudinous Regent Street correspondents tells me that he has looked up a Post-Office Directory for 1834, which he keeps as a curiosity, and he has passed a very amusing half-hour in looking up the various firms mentioned by me. Most of their

number he found recorded in the old directory, which, of course, is a very different book from the colossal tome of to-day; still, it is at the same time fully worthy of perusal, especially in relation to the postal arrangements, and the coaching and shipping industries in the days before Rowland Hill, George and Robert Stephenson, and Lieutenant Waghorn. My correspondent has kindly promised to lend me his copy of the 1834 Directory, and I will gladly avail myself of his kindness. I feel sure that I shall be able to make from it an amusing page of London, not "up," but "out of date."

Another friend reminds me that the box office under the Opera Colonnade—that colonnade which will so soon vanish from the face of London—was adjoining or part of the premises of "Charlie" Wright, the wine merchant. Certainly, Mr. Charles Wright was celebrated for the extremely cheap brands of champagne which he vended; I have his advertisement before me now:—

EXTRAORDINARY!!

Wines from the wood as imported—Imperial measure.

Port and Sherry, 11s. per Gallon; 2s. 9d. per Quart; 1s. 4½d. per Pint; 4d. per Gill.

Cape Madeira, 7s. per Gallon; 1s. 9d. per Quart; 10½d. per Pint; 2½d. per Gill.

All other Wines, Spirits, Porter, Ale, Cyder, etc., proportionately Cheap; Florence Oil, 1s. 6d. per Flask. •

CHARLES WRIGHT, OPERA COLONNADE, HAYMARKET.

And Mr. W. carried on business next to the Opera Box office, but Mr. Seguin, my informant tells me, kept the print shop at the corner of Carlton Street, and he had two sons who became concert-singers of some eminence.

The name of the proprietor of the establishment where alabaster vases and copies of Canova's Dancing Girl were vended was Nosedà ; and the shop was a little above that of the inventor of the Pannus Corium, whose portrait in crayons—but was it not a portrait in oil and without a frame?—adorned for many years a corner of one of the windows.¹

A little farther north, lodged the world-famous violinist Paganini. Him I remember well, not in Regent Street, but at Brighton about 1836—a gaunt, weird man, with long grey-black hair and hollow cheeks and flashing eyes. I never see Henry Irving without recalling Paganini to my mind. I can remember vividly the impression created within me by his playing. It was that he had got inside his violin a devil, and that the imprisoned fiend-demon was now shrieking, now menacing, now supplicating, and now seeking by caressing endearments to obtain his liberty from the magician with the fiddle-stick who was grasping his fiend-tenanted fiddle so firmly by the throat. Paganini played a fantasia on the violin at a concert given by my mother at Brighton, at which the *prima donna* was the enchanting Marie Malibran ; and the illustrious violinist gave me next day, small boy as I was, in a very large frill and a “skeleton” suit, a bank-note for fifty pounds. The gift was conferred under peculiar and almost extraordinary circumstances ; but I have already told the tale in print and I may not repeat it now.

Then, again, my informant remembers seeing Rossini

¹ These essays originally appeared in a periodical now defunct.

—the “Swan of Pesaro”—the wondrous composer of the *Stabat Mater* and the *Barber of Seville*, with his wife and a magnificent macaw, sitting out on the leads over the colonnade of the Quadrant, under which was the shop of Mr. Stubbs, the blindmaker, whose window was adorned with an effective transparency of the Thames Tunnel. Furthermore, this most copious of scholiasts upon Regent Street reminds me that Mr. Johnson, the wife of the hatter at the corner of Vigo Street, must have been an exceptional schoolmistress, since everybody spoke of her with affection. Among her pupils was a daughter of the famous Italian *prima donna*, Madame Pasta, who was at the time appearing in *Semiramide* at the *His Majesty's Theatre*. He proceeds to tell me that Verrey, the restaurateur, first started in business as a pastrycook on the east side of Regent Street, and had a young lady assistant so very good-looking that she created a sensation as the “Regent Street Beauty.” It was a period, I may add myself, when “behind the counter” beauties were rather popular at the West End.

There was a splendid specimen of female loveliness and gorgeousness of toilette at a tobacconist's in Jermyn Street, and this fair dame was reputed to be none other than “La Belle Limonadière,” from the Café des Mille Colonnes in Paris; and in some other fashionable street, the name of which I fail to remember, there was a handsome swarthy dame who presided behind the counter of a perfumer's and glove shop, and whom rumour declared to have been a member of the

abundant harem of the deposed Dey of Algiers. The Dey had brought her, after 30th July, to Naples; but the swarthy light of the harem did not see the fun of remaining the slave of a tyrannical and naughty old Bashaw of Three Tails, so, with several of her lady friends similarly circumstanced, she showed the Dey of Algiers a clean pair of heels and went with some success into the perfumery and glove business.

Touching the "Pannus Corium," Messrs. C. Godfrey Hall and Co. write me a note which affords another curious illustration of Dickens's association with Regent Street. "You appear," they say, "to doubt whether we were known in the time of Charles Dickens. Will you permit us to say that we made the great novelist's shoes for upwards of twenty years; and only quite recently we were asked to certify this by a lecturer in America, who had bought three pairs of old shoes with our name inside at 'Bleak House,' a long time ago, and who was exhibiting them through the States." I may here mention, while we are on the subject of the illustrious patron of Pannus Corium, that another correspondent writes that in an edition of *Nickleby*—a modern and cheap one published by Ward, Lock, and Co.—the Opera Box office paragraph concludes, "when Mr. Seguin gives away the orders." Thus the Ward and Lock edition has evidently been reprinted from the original issue.

Now for a little bit of an "excursus" *inside* the big one. A correspondent at Bournemouth had been reading that which I said about Mr. Tucker the naturalist's

shop under the Regent's Quadrant, and took grave exception to my incidental supposition that Mr. Tucker kept his ostrich, and roc, and dodo, and moa-skins in the cellar. As gravely he informed me that the only complete record we have of the dodo is in the shape of a drawing in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford ; that the roc is a fabulous bird, chiefly known through the medium of the *Arabian Nights* ; and that the moa is an extinct prehistoric bird of immense size. Yes, dear sir, truly so ; only he did not appear to understand that the passage in question was "rit ironical." By the way, I have seen in New Zealand the incomplete skeleton of a moa.

In this connection, allow me to relate a little apologue. I was lecturing some years ago at Toowoomba, in Queensland, and among other matters on which I touched was the invariable success achieved by the Scotch as colonists. There was nothing to be surprised at in the fact, I added, for had not India itself been once conquered by a perfervid Scot—Alexander of Mackdon? The jokelet was a very small one, and provoked only a mild titter ; but just after the lecture I was waited upon by one of the most Scottish-looking Scotchmen I had ever seen. He was immensely tall, had a very red head, and looked like John Balfour of Burleigh, Rob Roy Macgregor, Fergus MacIvor, and the Dougal Creature rolled into one. "I have heard you discourse," he remarked, "and I partly agree with ye ; but ye made just one clerical error. Alexander the Great was King of Macedon, not Mackdon."

I promised to allude further to Cramer's music warehouse in Regent Street, and I will proceed to the best of my ability to redeem my pledge; but my readers will be kind enough to take my statements, as the lawyers say, with "errors excepted." My personal knowledge of any individual Cramer is very slight. I *think*—mind you, I only think—that there was a Mr. François Cramer, who was leader of the orchestra at His Majesty's Theatre when Laporte was manager, and the late Sir Michael Costa conductor. Costa only waved his baton during the opera; when the ballet—and what a ballet it was!—began, the leader, who was a violinist, took the command, directing the instrumentalists, not with a baton, but a bow. Very old opera-goers will set me right if I am wrong.

I never knew, personally, any Cramer connected with the great music warehouse at the corner of Conduit Street. The firm, when I first remember it, went by the style and title of Cramer, Addison, and Beale. Mr. Addison was a bluff, kind-hearted *bourgeois*, and an admirable man of business. His partner, Mr. Frederick Beale, was a gentleman who to business energy added a good deal of culture and exceptional conversational powers. He was the father of the extant Mr. Willert Beale, very well known indeed in musical circles, and who not long ago published two very amusing volumes of his lyrical reminiscences. The elder Mr. Beale was also, I think, one of the first promoters of the Langham Hotel, Portland Place.

Touching the Cramers as a family, there were so

many of them that it is rather difficult to ascertain their separate personalities. John Baptist Cramer, who established the firm of J. B. Cramer and Co., music publishers, was an eminent pianist, and one of the principal founders of the modern pianoforte school. He was a scion of a well-known family of German musicians, and was born at Mannheim; but moved with his father, Wilhelm, to London in 1772. He died in London in 1858.

As a small boy, during the summer season—the winter one we always spent at Brighton,—I was continually in and out of Cramer's in quest of pieces of music required by my mother for the use of her pupils. That circumstance occurred to me, oddly enough, when, some time since, I was privileged to open an Exhibition of Musical Instruments, Ancient and Modern, at the Royal Westminster Aquarium, and in the course of some brief remarks I made to my hearers I incidentally said that I had had perhaps a little too much music in my early days, and did not care much about it now. I was intensely amused the next day to find a sapient reporter saying, in his notice of the Exhibition, that I had confessed to knowing very little about music, and that consequently I wisely abstained from the use of any technical terms. Bless the man! If he only knew how many hundreds of songs and duets that I have had to copy out—ay, and to transpose—when I was young, and how, getting thoroughly sick of the too technical toil, I sometimes invoked anything but blessings on the heads of Bellini, Donizetti, and Carl Maria von Weber.

The mighty master who wrote *Der Freischütz* and *Oberon* I never knew. He died just before my time; but he was a friend of our family during his brief sojourn in England in 1826, when he superintended the production of *Oberon* at Covent Garden. In an old album stamped with the initials of my father, whom I never saw, there is a water-colour sketch, possibly from his hand, of Weber in a long striped dressing-gown, leaning forward in an arm-chair, and evidently in the wretchedest of health. The sketch is dated February 1826, and the gifted composer died a few weeks after.

But if I did not behold the great German *maestro* at Cramer's, I have seen Bellini there. The composer of *La Sonnambula* and *Norma* was, if I remember aright, a very handsome gentleman, with large blue eyes and silky auburn hair. Of Donizetti, the composer of the *Puritani*, *Lucrezia Borgia*, and many other enchanting works which they seem rarely to play nowadays, all that I can remember was that out of doors he invariably wore his hat very far at the back of his head.

TRAVELS IN REGENT STREET

PART IV

SINCE I incidentally made mention of the bugle inscribed with the name of Cramer, in Sergeant-Major Cotton's Waterloo Museum, I have been slightly troubled in my mind as to whether this particular Cramer was the artiste who afterwards founded the great music warehouse in Regent Street. My doubts on this point were happily dispelled by a letter which I received from one of my many Regent Street correspondents, who told me that he possessed a copy of Kent's London Directory for 1817, "printed and sold by Henry Kemp Causton"; and that therein he found the name of "J. Cramer" as a Martial and Musical Instrument Maker, Pimlico road, Chelsea. Pimlico road is the long thoroughfare extending from Buckingham Palace Road to Chelsea Hospital; and if "J. Cramer" was making "martial instruments" two years after Waterloo, the inference is allowable that he was fashioning his trumpets and bugles there in the Waterloo year itself.

"Apropos," writes another unknown friend, "of your

article, 'Travels in Regent Street,' will you pardon me if I venture to call your attention to what was some twenty-seven or twenty-eight years ago considered a great Regent Street curiosity—namely, the stuffed natural horse which adorned the window of one Joseph Abel, a tailor? I mention it inasmuch as it was at that time the only thing of the kind exhibited in any shop window in London." Is this so? I have a dim remembrance of the effigy of a lady in a riding-habit mounted on a fiery charger in the Regent Street shop window at least five-and-thirty years ago; but, perhaps, the horse was a wooden one, and not a stuffed, natural specimen of the equine race!

Touching animals in general, I fear that if I were to venture upon an essay on all the stuffed, stone, or wooden bipeds that I can remember in Regent Street, my readers would soon cry, "Hold, enough!" I may just glance, however, at the terrific array of stuffed lions, tigers, leopards, bears, and other fearful wild fowl, which were wont to glare at you, and which seemed to shake their manes and lash their savage flanks with vehement tails, at a furrier's shop close to that Little Argyll Street of which I have already discoursed. Then there were the two granite lions "sejant" on stone pedestals, close to Madame Elise's, the noses of which noble animals were about 1837 cruelly abraded and then painted sky-blue by the eccentric Marquis of Waterford or some of his wild associates. Animal Regent Street I reserve for a paper which (D.V.) I mean to write some day, entitled "Easily

Pleased," setting forth the pleasant and interesting sights which a street saunterer in London can feast his eyes upon for nothing. Regent Street used to offer an enchanting variety of such gratuitous spectacles. There was a maker of filters—was his name Lipscombe?—who in his window used to display a mimic and miniature representation of the *Grandes Eaux* at Versailles. At least, there was an impetuously spouting little fountain, accessory to which was a ball of cork or pith which was continually hopping, and skipping, and dodging round the column of water, sometimes jumping to the summit of the jet and perching there for quite a long time, and then ignominiously tumbling over into the basin of the fountain, like Humpty Dumpty in the nursery rhyme. The cork ball was, however, happier than Dumpty; since, even without the intervention of all the king's horses and all the king's men, it always contrived soon after its cascade to hop up to the top of the fountain again.

Also was there a little waxen effigy of a gentleman with a beautifully curled head of hair and elaborately trimmed whiskers and moustachios, who was exhibited at a hosier's shop, wearing the most symmetrical under-vest and under-pantaloons of spun-silk that you ever saw. Half-nude but not ashamed, the little gentleman in silk underclothing was a sweet boon to me; and I daresay he has been one to many thousands of street saunterers in the Regent Street past. He may be there yet for aught I know,—spruce, faultlessly attired, and with an eternal simper on his somewhat too self-con-

scious waxen lips. I cannot say, however, that when I was young the little dandy in silk tights filled the first place in my heart. He was truly dear to me; but having been always a respectfully ardent admirer of the fair sex, I suspect that the larger half of my affections were secured by the waxen effigy of a lovely young lady, highly rouged, with the most ravishing blue glass eyes imaginable and very long silky lashes, whose hair was arranged in a multiplicity of long fair ringlets, something like uncooked pork sausages which had been artfully convoluted; while, at the back of her head, there was a plaited chignon, or top-knot, in which was fixed an immense tortoise-shell comb of concave diadem form, adorned with pearls. I think that I first made the acquaintance of this fair Helen in wax in the year of Her Majesty's coronation. To me, this mute beauty in ringlets presented additional fascinations of an almost ecstatic kind. First, by means of an arrangement in clock-work concealed in the pedestal supporting her bust, she was continually, slowly and gracefully revolving, so that one could admire the top-knot and the tortoise-shell comb, as well as the blonde ringlets. And, again, her snowy arms were bare, and instead of her bust being attired in ball costume, as is usual in the case of similar dummies, she wore a ravishing corset of emerald green satin, sprigged with pink flowers and richly adorned with black lace. Whether she was the pride and ornament of a hairdresser's or a stay-maker's shop, I can scarcely recall to mind.

Yet another correspondent, who notes my having

alluded to a personal remembrance of Mr. Swan, of the firm of Swan and Edgar in Regent Street and Piccadilly. Now my correspondent has been informed by an "old hand," still in the employ of that monumental establishment, that there never was a Mr. Swan in the firm. Perhaps it was Mr. Edgar whom I remember; but here comes in a somewhat curious little incident in connection with the historic house. A good many years ago, my friend, Mr. Henry Sutherland Edwards, wrote a burlesque, produced at the St. James's Theatre, and entitled *Edgar and the Swan*. It is a laughable fact, that the firm of Swan and Edgar actually approached the Lord Chamberlain for the time being with the request that the title of Mr. Sutherland Edwards's extravaganza might be altered; *seeing that they never advertised*, and that *Edgar and the Swan* wore a perilous resemblance to an advertisement, and might indirectly damage their commercial prestige!

Times change, and we change with them. Of quite a different opinion touching advertisements was my old friend, Mr. H. Melton, a very well-known Regent Street hatter and a gentleman of considerable and genuine humour. Long years ago there was exhibited at the Royal Academy a picture of two dogs, the property of the Prince Consort, crouching on a table on which were also shown the Prince's hat and gloves. The hat was placed at such an angle that the inside of the crown could not be seen; and Mr. Melton used to say with a sigh, "Ah, sir, if Sir Edwin had only moved that hat two inches and a half to the right, so as to exhibit the

royal arms inside the crown and the inscription, 'H. Melton, Hatter to His Royal Highness the Prince Consort,' what a beautiful cheque would I not have sent to the illustrious painter!" "But Sir Edwin would not have accepted the cheque," I used to observe. "No matter," replied the diplomatic hatter, "I would have bought a horse fifty hands high, and at least the great artist would have accepted a commission to paint *that*."

Here, for the present, and finally in this place at least, I part with my friendly Regent Street correspondents. They have been very kind and forbearing to me; and I have not had one spiteful letter. Perhaps I may be spared to write, some day, a real little compendious history of Regent Street, from its inception in the brain of Nash, Prince of Architects, to the present day; but, ere I bring these desultory sketches of the famous thoroughfare to a close, I may be suffered to utter one mournful wail, feeble but plaintive, on the disappearance of the dear old Regent's Quadrant. It is not by any means for the first time that I have thus liberated my soul in sorrowful accents on this theme; for you must remember that I am a very old Cockney, and that the London of my youth has in fifty districts, north, south, east, and west, been all but completely transformed. Still, I shall never regard the demolition of the column-supported arcades of the Quadrant as anything but an act of deliberate and unpardonable vandalism. The colonnade was a distinctly original construction; and its quadrantal form was, as you may

know, due to the circumstance that George the Magnificent, when Prince Regent, was bent on having laid out on the Crown property one spacious and stately *Via Triumphalis* through which he might be able to ride in his coach and pair, or his coach and six, from his palace at Carlton House to another palace which he designed to build in the Regent's Park, erst Marylebone Fields. From one point to the other it would have been easy enough for Nash to have pierced a thoroughfare as straight as that which the Emperor Nicholas of Russia, with the aid of a pencil and ruler, drew for the route of the railway between St. Petersburg and Moscow; but, had Nash planned a perfectly straight Regent Street, he would have had to slice off a large piece of Jermyn Street, and, perhaps, even to impinge on St. James's Square. So, when he got from the corner of Glasshouse Street, he determined to turn in a curvilinear direction east, and then west again; and the gentle flowing line of the Quadrant terminating at the County Fire Office, which still happily retains its arcaded character, although it is not columniated, was made down Regent Street, southward, into Waterloo Place, and so to Carlton House.

It must be granted at once that the destruction of the Quadrant was not the outcome of parochial Bumble-dom; nor was there at the period of its demolition even a Metropolitan Board of Works, to say nothing of a London County Council, to decree the removal of the colonnade. The deed was done by Her Majesty's Office of Works, moved by the strong representations of the

majority of the Quadrant shopkeepers. These unæsthetic tradesmen urged, in the first place, that the colonnade was dark, and that the obscurity which reigned there during, perhaps, seven months of the year, prevented them from displaying their wares to the best advantage. If they had only waited three years longer—I think the vandalism was perpetrated about 1848—they would have found a Paxton who might have built for them an arcade or a colonnade of glass and iron which would have been handsome as well as elegant, and as light as one of the bays of the Crystal Palace; but they were in a hurry, and in 1848 Paxton was still building green-houses for the Duke of Devonshire at Chatsworth.

Again, the Quadrant tradesmen pleaded that when the place was lit up by gas at night, the brilliance of the scene attracted hordes of bad characters of both sexes to the spot. This is true to a certain extent; but I have never known a period when bad characters of both sexes did not congregate in some part of the West End, whether sheltered by arcades or the contrary. Regent Street “up to date” is both by day and by night an unimpeachably moral and virtuous thoroughfare, and the same in degree may be said of Waterloo Place, and even of the formerly naughty Haymarket. But how about Piccadilly from the western corner of the Circus almost as far as St. James’s Church? Is that, nocturnally, quite a Piccadilly to be proud of?

The disappearance of the pillars, of which some faint traces may yet be visible where Air Street intersects the Quadrant, was regarded by foreigners as an almost

phenomenal illustration of the stupid indifference of Londoners to the handsomeness of their own Metropolis. For at least twenty years the Regent's Quadrant had been looked upon by the French as one of the few really comely architectural adornments of London. Views of the Quadrant were often engraved in books of English travel written by French, German, and even Italian and Spanish sojourners in our midst; and I have before me a sheet of French note-paper full fifty years old, the top of which bears a tastefully engraved vignette of the Quadrant, to which the Continental artist has given the widely embracing and somewhat arrogant title of "*La Ville de Londres*."

I daresay that country cousins still think this part of Regent Street very grandiose, and their admiration may be shared by our American visitors; and, I should say, to the majority of competent judges of architectural effect, the Quadrant, shorn of its colonnade, presents only the aspect of two very bald and monotonous façades; the only curiosity connected with which, is that they are built on a curve forming the fourth of a circle.

Regent Street survived that which its greatest admirers mournfully anticipated would be its deathblow; and it survives to this day as one of the most fashionable, the most interesting, and the most deservedly popular thoroughfares in the Metropolis. It seems practically impossible to rob streets in any great civilised city of their peculiar and traditional characteristics. Thus, one can scarcely realise the idea of a Pall Mall or a St. James's Street without palatial club-houses; and you

must remember that before the days of clubs there were many aristocratic coffee-houses and taverns in the two thoroughfares just named. It is as difficult to picture a Fleet Street destitute of newspaper offices ; a Strand devoid of a multitude of taverns and eating-houses ; a Bow Street, Covent Garden, without an Opera House, or a Catherine Street without a Drury Lane Theatre. Bond Street, again, is not only largely taken up by fashionable millinery and dressmaking establishments, but is also the chosen home of Fine Art emporia ; to say nothing of establishments for the sale of bric-à-brac, together with a few music shops and libraries, where tickets for the Opera and the principal theatres can be purchased.

Regent Street, on the other hand, has a purely modern history, and is absolutely void of historic traditions. The splendid boulevard designed by Nash was driven through a labyrinth of slums, and principally absorbed a long, devious, dirty thoroughfare called Great Swallow Street, which, three generations since, was full of pawnbrokers, dram-shops, and more than equivocal livery stables, which were said to be extensively patronised by professional highwaymen who were naturally desirous that their steeds should be taken into bait at stables where no questions were asked. A few of the slums which once covered the entire area of Regent Street, continue to fringe it on the eastern side, but, on the whole, structurally speaking, the street may be taken as a really surprising illustration of the bright capacity of Nash.

In proof of what I say, look at Shaftesbury Avenue and Charing Cross Road. They are spacious enough in all conscience and properly alineated, and both contain a number of very handsome and even imposing edifices, theatres, residential mansions, warehouses, and gin palaces—especially gin palaces—but the architecture is throughout straggling, scrappy, and inconsistent. A towering edifice of six storeys has for its near neighbour a tottering little tenement which ought to be pulled down. At almost every intersection of this new boulevard you are forced to obtain a near and far from pleasant view of an unmistakably genuine Soho or Seven Dials slum, which stretches behind the grand new piles of buildings. It is not so with Regent Street. The fringe of slums between Carnaby Street and Poland Street is invisible. In Nash's noble thoroughfare you only see well-designed and harmonious blocks of handsome buildings, which, were they only a couple of storeys higher, would make the street as handsome as the Avenue de l'Opera in Paris.

ONE A.M. AT THE *MORNING MAMMOTH*
NEWSPAPER OFFICE

PART I

WILD horses shall not drag from me the secret of the whereabouts of the office of the *Morning Mammoth* newspaper. It may be in Fleet Street; possibly it is in Whitefriars; peradventure it has its habitat in Wellington Street, Strand; as likely as not, its offices may be in Shoe Lane; nor will I undertake to say that the *Morning Mammoth* does not hang out its sign somewhere between Ludgate Hill and Puddle Dock. At all events, it is a wonderful newspaper, it has not the largest circulation in the world, but the largest in the two worlds, with the planet Mars thrown in a special edition—printed in red ink on touch-paper—being published every morning for the benefit of the inhabitants of that fiery star.

Oddly enough, there are at least half a dozen daily competitors of the *Morning Mammoth* which all claim, and justly claim, an astoundingly large circulation. The *Daily Megatherium* sells, we all know, by millions. The circulation of the *Morning Plesiosaurus*, is pheno-

menally gigantic, and the same may be said of the *Panæotherium*, the *Daily Anoplotherium*, and the *Morning Mastodon*. Other lights among these tremendous diurnals are the *Iguanodon* and the *Morning Dipsopoios*, which last old-established and estimable journal is the organ of the licensed victuallers ; and, if we are to believe journalistic tradition, it once exhibited in the windows of its office a placard bearing the inscription, "Terrible Revelations at Bow Street Police Station : Fearful Increase of the Horrible Crime of Pot Stealing."

As for the wealth of the proprietors of these mighty newspapers and the social position which they occupy, words fail me to give anything like an idea of the immensity of the former and the grandeur of the latter. It was the boast of the proprietors of the *Paris National*, after the Revolution of July 1830, that nearly all their chief contributors had become either Ministers of State or Ambassadors to Foreign Courts ; and there were certainly a goodly number of journalists in the Provisional Government of February 1848. But the distinction gained by journalists in the days of Thiers and Guizot, Armand Carrel, Armand Marrast, Louis Blanc, and Emile de Girardin, were as naught compared with the honours which have been showered by a gracious Sovereign on the proprietors of the great London dailies.

I am not quite certain whether the chief owner of the *Morning Mammoth* is an earl or a viscount, but I am well assured that he is a peer of the realm. The guiding spirit of the *Megatherium* is only a baronet and a K.C.B., while the conductor of the *Morning Dipsopoios*

has just been knighted *en attendant mieux*; still, seeing that among the members of the Managing Committee of the *Dipsopoios* there are several brewers and distillers who have deservedly become members of the House of Lords, it is only a matter of time for the genial knight who presides over the Bonifaces' organ to be able to write Bart. after his name. It may be hinted also, that although the members of the editorial staff of the journals at which I am glancing have not yet accepted coronets, several of the leading-article writers are connected with the aristocracy. One has no less than three M.P.'s in its employ, the dramatic critic of another is a count of the Holy Roman Empire, and yet another is a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St. Rawhead, a dignity conferred upon him by the late Hokey-Pokey Wankifum, the lamented King of the Cannibal Islands.

It is 1 in the morning, and things are in the fullest of full swings and at the fullest of full blast at the offices of the *Morning Mammoth*. I will assume for the nonce that you yourself are a journalist—you may be one in truth some of these days; we never know to what we may come, as the gentleman remarked on his way to Tyburn—and that you have business to transact at the office of the newspaper, the proprietors of which pay you a salary, ranging between eleven and fifty guineas a week, exclusive of an annual holiday of seven weeks, a superb turkey and a pound of Lipton's tea at Christmas, and a neat present of jewellery every year on your wife's birthday. Now what kind of journalist shall

I elect that you shall be throughout three or four pages of printed matter ?

"Sir," wrote to me recently a young gentleman who told me that he had determined to become a gentleman of the press, "what particular line in the newspaper vocation would you advise me to take up ; or shall I start as an all-round journalist?" I told him, in reply, that so far as taking up a special line in the newspaper craft was concerned, he might try to write the daily Auction Summary, or essay to put a little fun into the Police Reports and Coroner's inquests, or exercise his hand at brief paragraphs describing an outbreak of measles in the Second Life Guards, or the rumoured apparition of a ghost in Little Turnstile, Lincoln's Inn Fields ; to say nothing of giving up three parts of his life to learning shorthand ; while, if his ambition extended to becoming an all-round contributor to the columns of a great daily paper, the best thing he could do would be to turn his attention forthwith to the acquisition of at least nine languages, ancient and modern ; travel repeatedly all over the world ; consort with all classes of the community from dukes to dustmen, and from bishops to burglars ; thoroughly ground himself in land surveying, modelling in clay, the history of the British drama, political economy, Chinese metaphysics, Ruff's *Guide to the Turf*, theosophy, domestic hygiene and massage, and then see what came of it. Altogether, perhaps, it might be best if I resolve to make my imaginary visitor to the *Morning Mammoth* office an all-round journalist.

Your able editor sent you this evening to the Royal Brocoli Theatre, Strand, to witness the first performance of Sir Amati Stradivarius's new light opera of *Robin Hood up to Date ; or Maid Marian and the Sheriff of Nottingham*. Of course the opera, the libretto of which was written by that delightful playwright, Mr. Woodhouse Spoon, C.B., was a brilliant, amazing, and unprecedented success. You wrote all that down, you remember, in the afternoon in the smoking-room of the Broad Grins Club, Northumberland Avenue, where you had been lunching ; Woodhouse Spoon, who is also a member of the Broad Grins, having presented you with an advance copy of his sparkling libretto. After that, you glanced over a few pages of Sir George Grove's *Dictionary of Music*. It is always as well to rub up now and again one's acquaintance with musical terms. So you found yourself well primed for the performance of your critical task when you ensconced yourself in your snug stall at the Brocoli when the first act of *Robin Hood* was about half over. An enchanting opera, truly ; never was Sir Amati in better vein ; the music, on the whole, you considered as melodious as Mozart, and as learned as Wagner's. As for Woodhouse Spoon's dialogue and patter-songs, they excelled in crisp, sparkling wit and humour all that the distinguished writer had previously achieved.

The opera was not over until nearly midnight, and then you looked in at the Sweetbread Club to have a little supper—say, a cold grouse and bread sauce, or some sausages and mashed potatoes, and a pint of very

dry Ayala, and a quiet cup of coffee, and a mild cigar afterwards. These refreshments being dispatched, you thought it might be as well if you finished your article. To be sure, there was not much left to write, and your able editor had emphatically told you that he did not want more than three-quarters of a column. However, you have got through your work comfortably by a quarter to 1. You emerge from the gorgeous portals of the Sweetbread Club, and one of the many-buttoned pages obsequiously opens for you the door of your brougham—musical critics only keep broughams and pair, dramatists ride in coaches and six, and Mr. G. R. Sims, I am informed, always buys the reversion of the State chariots of the Sheriffs of London.

You drive down to the office of the *Morning Mammoth*, but where that office is situated, I repeat that unbroken Australian buck-jumpers, backed by a hydraulic screw and an indefinite number of steam rams, would not force me to divulge. You arrive at the office and hand in your copy to one of the many commissionaires in full uniform in waiting at the lodge of the paper, and then you ascend a grand staircase of pure Pentelican marble with gilt bronze railings and a river of rich Persian carpet running down the middle, and so repair to the room specially appointed for your use. It more resembles a boudoir in Belgravia than the room of a working journalist in a street the name of which shall never be mentioned by me. Admire the costly furniture, the priceless works of art which embellish the mantelpiece, and the framed

and glazed engraved portraits, after eminent R.A.'s, of the Marquis of Salisbury, Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. John Morley, and especially Mr. Henry Labouchere ! For the *Morning Mammoth* is an all-round journal, even as you yourself are an all-round journalist ; which holds the candle on occasion to all kinds of politicians, and may have to hold one some day, perchance, to the wicked "Labby."

You extend your sable-clad, and not too-wearied limbs on the cushions of a luxurious divan, light another cigar, and, perhaps, if you feel thirsty, you touch an electric bell, and instruct a powdered footman to bring you a tumbler of Capillaire and water, or a lemon squash. Then you patiently wait till the proofs of your article on *Robin Hood* are ready.

Grump, the art critic of the paper, is in the next room to you ; he has been to the private view of the exhibition of the works of Middle-aged Masters at the Royal Academy. He has received his proofs of an article, two columns and a half long, and naturally he is swearing. The British army, so Corporal Trim in *Tristram Shandy* told us long ago, swore terribly in Flanders ; but I cannot help fancying that the language of Marlborough's Grenadiers and Dragoons was mild in comparison with the habitual parlance of Grump. Wolfe Grump is his name, and he is one of the last of the old race of hard-swearing journalists. You will be told also that Grump's room is not by any means a luxuriously furnished or artistically decorated apartment. Indeed, you will learn that it is on the whole

rather bare and squalid in appearance, and that Grump, whose tastes are very simple, prefers to sit on a rush-bottomed chair and write at a deal table, and that when he does partake of any nocturnal refreshment, his supper is usually composed of three penny-worth of fried fish, a penny loaf, and a pint of porter.

The object of his objurgations to-night are the compositors, or rather the printer's readers, who have made, as you hear him hoarsely growl, ducks and drakes of his article. "Idiot!" "Fool!" "Blockhead!" "Dullard!" "Ignorant rascal!" "Dunce!" "Pig!" "Ass!" "Beast!" are the flowers of rhetoric which Wolfe Grump throws around him as he fags through a critique in which, perhaps, the name of Raffaele has been printed Raphael, or in which Van Dyck has been called Van Dyke, or Gerard Douw, Gerald Dow. A worthy man, Grump, although they say his guns are getting a little rusty. He was originally, you are informed, captain of a penny steamboat on the Thames, then he drove an omnibus, subsequently he went out to the Australian colonies to dig for gold, and came back penniless, with the rheumatism and a choice addition to his stock of execrations and anathemas, acquired while seeking for nuggets at Ballarat and driving a bullock dray on the Darling Downs. Grump's early training, as you will see, admirably fits him for his calling as an all-round journalist. At one time he edited the *Cobbler's Last*, that well-known organ of the boot and shoe "translating" trade. He was also at different periods of his career a Papal zouave, an under-

taker's man, a schoolmaster, an insurance agent, and a lecturer on hypnotism. Then he was the special correspondent of the *Morning Dipsopoios* in the Behring Straits, and was war correspondent for the *Megatherium* in the Franco-German war of 1870. He has a fine Roman hand at describing naval reviews, ship launches, and the laying of first stones by royalty, and in dashing off the humours of a prize fight or a Derby day. There are few all-round journalists who can equal Grump, who has been also frequently thanked by his able editor for the dramatic power with which he has treated such miscellaneous themes as an Exeter Hall May meeting, a private execution in Newgate, and the enthronisation of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

There is one thing, however, which you will be warned that Grump is quite unable to do. He was sent to report a fashionable wedding once, and made a sad hash of it. He did not know the difference in fabrics between nun's veiling and *poult de soie*, and in colours, he confounded "*eau de nil*" with "apricot"; and at last, getting desperate, he wrote that "the bride wore something sleezy on her head like a drawing-room window curtain, and that the bridesmaids carried bouquets of polyanthuses and sunflowers." Wretched man! he should have said tea-roses and white geraniums. The appearance of this article caused a sad commotion among the lady readers of the *Morning Mammoth*, and you may depend upon it that Wolfe Grump was never sent to write about fashionable weddings again.

But hark! hush! even as Grump, having reached the end of his proofs, has ceased to use strong language, and is presumably soothing his perturbed soul by lighting up that old briarwood pipe, which he invariably carries, with an india-rubber bagful of bird's-eye tobacco, in the breast-pocket of his shabby old shooting-jacket, you hear outside your door the *frou-frou* of a lady's silk dress. Silence! be discreet! essay not to open that door. If you did you might catch a glance of a sylph-like form elegantly robed, flitting up the staircase towards the sub-editor's room; but I, who for the moment am Asmodeus, and am opening all the doors of the *Morning Mammoth* for your inspection, even as the *Lame Devil* in Le Sage's novel unroofed the houses in Madrid for the benefit of the Spanish student, may follow the lady with the silken dress into the sub-editor's room, with which I intend that you shall make minute acquaintance later on. For the present be satisfied with the knowledge that the lady of the *frou-frou* is none other than that bright star of aristocratic society, the Honourable Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs, the eldest daughter of Viscount Fitz-Jeames of Plushington, County Eider-Down, that well-known but chronically embarrassed Irish peer.

It would be unpardonably impertinent to inquire into the age of the Hon. Carolina, but there will be no harm in hinting that on the last occasion of *Atlas*, in the *World*, wishing her many happy returns of the day, the charming creature was celebrating the fifteenth anniversary of her thirtieth birthday. To her graceful

and polished pen the world (not Edmund's) owes all those fascinating descriptions of female dress, not only at weddings, but at garden parties, Henley regattas, Oxford and Cambridge boat races and cricket matches, for which the *Morning Mammoth* is so justly celebrated. The Hon. Miss Skeggs is equally at home on the Ladies' Lawn at Goodwood, and in the Royal enclosure on the Cup Day at Ascot. She is somewhat of a Protean lady journalist. I fancy that if I were to take you a little later to-night, or, rather, this morning, to the office of the *Megatherium*, you would hear the *frou-frou* of a lady's dress; but you would find that the Hon. Carolina Wilhelmina Skeggs had been transformed into a stout and comely lady, say Mrs. Backbone, who is on intimate terms with all the great Court dressmakers and smart milliners in London, and who, in addition to writing descriptions of the dresses worn at smart functions, runs over to Paris now and again to see the newest gowns and fal-lals, and indites columns thereon in the journal of which she is the pride and ornament.

ONE A.M. AT THE *MORNING MAMMOTH*
NEWSPAPER OFFICE

PART II

JUST so. You have corrected your proofs, and the printer was kind enough to send you a remarkably "clean" revise; the absence of blunders from which may be partially due to the fact of your writing such an execrably bad hand that special compositors and readers of long experience in deciphering the most illegible cacography are usually told off to set up and correct your article. You are free to depart. There is no need for you to wish your able editor good-night. You have no very burning ambition to see *him*, and you are quite confident that he has not the slightest wish to see *you*. So you don your overcoat and hesitate a little, as you descend the grand marble staircase, as to whether you will look in at the Junior Penwipers' Club in Park Lane, or go straight home to your lodgings in Great St. Andrew's Street, Seven Dials, W.C.—stay, stay!—I mean your luxurious chambers in the Albany, or your elegant little maisonette at Kensington Gore.

Courteously returning the salute of the commission-

aire at the outer gate of the *Morning Mammoth*—a fine specimen of wrought iron-work, gilt, from the Place Stanislas, Nancy—you see standing in front thereof the dainty little coupé of the Hon. Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs. Her coachman, you notice, wears a cockade in his hat; a distinction which Miss Skeggs's close connection with the Court really entitles him to assume. But just as you are entering your own equipage—*your* man does not wear a cockade, and you do not even have a crest on your carriage panels, as you have no wish to pay the duty on armorial bearings—you behold, driving up to the portals of the *M. M.* office, the rapidest of hansoms; and from this vehicle there leaps a tall, spare, middle-aged, prematurely grizzled gentleman, attired in weather-stained travelling costume, and bearing in one hand a small and much battered and frayed Russia leather valise. He airily tosses the driver half-a-crown; and when the man grumbly demands an additional shilling, the tall gentleman declines to pay any more, but blithely offers to fight cabby for the difference. So No. 8006 grimly drives away, muttering to himself that "there's no gettin' forrarder with the capting nohow."

The tall spare gentleman is not a captain; nor, indeed, does he at present hold any naval or military rank whatsoever. You recognise him at once as your old friend Rupert Swanquill, special war correspondent—and for the matter of that, peace correspondent to boot—of the *Morning Mammoth*. Scan him narrowly. Mark his face well; "it is worth looking at," as Danton

said on the scaffold to the executioner when he bade him show his severed head to the rabble. He may be fifty or only forty-five, or he may be close upon the sixties; but he has been practically an old man for many many years. Now he seems to have got over his age and to have become practically quite young again. When I say that Rupert Swanquill has never borne Her Majesty's commission, I ought to have added that he has seen in the by-gones a good deal of active military service. In fact, if I remember aright, he was once a trooper in the 90th Dragoon Guards, and was very possibly polishing stirrup-irons at the period when you had just completed your studies at the University of Oxbridge, or at St. Wapshot's Charity School, London Wall, E.C. It does not much matter which.

Rupert Swanquill succeeded Wolfe Grump as a war correspondent about the time when that capable but hard-swearing journalist was induced, in consequence of his increasing infirmities, to relinquish foreign service and to become an art critic. Swanquill as a war correspondent dates from the epoch of the Franco-German war. He was at all the great battles, and personally witnessed the Imperial surrender at Sedan. If I were asked where he has been and what he has done since the collapse of the Second Empire, I might inquire in reply whither he has *not* travelled and what he has *not* achieved in the service of the great journal to which he has been for more than twenty years accredited.

He has carried his life in his hand through India, through South-Eastern Europe, and through South Africa. He was in the Servian war and at the Shipka Pass. He is as well known at Constantinople as at Madrid, at Cape Town as at Calcutta, at Pietermaritzburg as at Moscow. He has looked at Fire, Famine, and Slaughter between the eyes; he has confronted Death in fifty forms, and pushed away Disease as blithely as just now he repulsed the extortionate cabman. The innumerable readers of the *Mammoth* have revelled in Rupert Swanquill's inimitably vigorous and graphic descriptions of the numerous campaigns of which he has been the spectator; but possibly they have not been aware of the fact that many of these stirring narratives have been penned by a special correspondent who, although he has always had on foreign service a pocketful of money, has not unfrequently been compelled by the force of circumstances to write column after column of "copy" with a drum, or a saddle, or a three-legged stool as a writing-desk; or to pen his effusions in some filthy Oriental hovel, surrounded by Turks, Jews, Gipsies, and heretics; to write with rags upon his back, fever in his limbs, and starvation in his belly; and then to ride twenty or thirty miles to the nearest telegraph station, thence to dispatch a message, costing perhaps three hundred pounds sterling for its transmission, to London, where, when his superb article is published, it will meet with the enthusiastic admiration of the public at large and the valuable approval of his able editor; while, at the same time, it is not at all unlikely that he

will be abused like a pickpocket in the next number of the *Saturday Review* because, in the course of a letter of perhaps five thousand words, he has made a mistake about the date of the Battle of Marathon, or spelt the name of Marshal Davout as Davoust.

Rupert has plenty of foreign decorations at home, given to him for his courage and fidelity in the field, but he is not allowed to wear his crosses and medals when he goes to court ; and no kind of honorific recognition or reward has ever been bestowed on him by the Government of his native country. There is no promotion in the special department of journalism in which he has won for himself a European celebrity. He never goes campaigning without running the risk of being killed in the field or captured and hanged for a spy ; but he is quite content to risk his life to do his duty to his employers and the public, and altogether to "grin and bear it," as the saying is. Rupert Swanquill has, it must be owned, his little faults and eccentricities. His temper is rather a lively one, and on occasion he will smite. I remember some years since, when I was in the city of the Suttan Pera, asking the war correspondent of a French daily paper whether he had ever met Rupert. "Oh yes," replied the Gallic journalist, "I know Monsieur Swanquill very well. A difficult person to deal with. If there be anything to eat, M. Swanquill eats it ; if there be anything to drink, M. Swanquill drinks it ; if there be a bed to spare, he sleeps in it, and if you remonstrate with him he beats you."

Rupert can spare you scarcely a minute's talk. He

has just come from Crim Tartary, or Trebizonde, or the Straits of Malacca, or Vladivostok, and is off to-morrow to the Desert of Gobé, the Black Mountain, or the North Pole. He only wishes to exchange a few words with the editor, and then England will know him no more for many months. You bid him a cordial "farewell"; but dear, dear me, what a world of metamorphoses this is!

Being Asmodeus, I am entitled to tell you that when Rupert Swanquill calls another hansom and directs the driver to convey him to the Hotel Windsor, Victoria Street, S.W., he undergoes an instantaneous and marvellous transformation. It is no spare, middle-aged, prematurely grizzled individual who emerges from the hansom and rings the bell at the hotel. I, Asmodeus, disguised as a police constable on night duty, take stock in the glare of the gas lamp of the gentleman who alights from the hansom. He is decidedly elderly, and he has a handsome and dignified mien, and he is in evening dress, having probably come from some great house where he has been dining, and where the festivities have been prolonged to a somewhat late hour; or perhaps he has come from the Kemble Club, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, of the renowned smoking-room of which palatial establishment he has long since been the pride and delight.

This is William Bohun Bayard, LL.D., the oldest and the most famous of English war correspondents, and the noblest Roman of them all. His intimate friends, to say nothing of a good many outsiders who are not by

any means intimate with him, are accustomed to call him "Billy" Bayard. He has seen war in all its occasionally glorious episodes, and in all its normally hideous dirt, desolation, and despair, all over the world. When our gallant soldiers in the Crimea were wasting away with famine and sickness, the voice of William Bohun Bayard spoke morning after morning, trumpet-tongued, in the columns of the great London newspaper of which he was then the correspondent, in denunciation of the neglect and mismanagement from which the army before Sebastopol was suffering; and materially did his undaunted onslaughts on red tape and pipeclay help the national movement for relief and rescue from misery worse than death to which the noble-hearted Florence Nightingale devoted herself, with results that will not be forgotten while any history of our land endures.

But I must leave the transformed special war correspondent at his hotel, and, strange to relate, it is now my Asmodean duty to look you up at your own apartments, wheresoever they may be situated, and take you right back to the office of the *Morning Mammoth*. Never mind waiting for a brougham or hailing a cab. It is getting dangerously near 2 in the morning and we must make hot haste. Besides, although I am only a Devil on Two Sticks and lame, I can hop along pretty quickly, and carry you, if need be, on my shoulders.

Here we are! We have come, not quite straight as an arrow from a Tartar's bow, but by Asmodean leaps and bounds, from the west to the east central end. I am invisible of course, but I waft you once more up the

marble staircase, and to an upper storey of the vast edifice in which the *Morning Mammoth* is printed and published. I have transformed you into Mr. Erasmus Polyglot. See, your name is painted in full on the door of the comfortable little chamber dedicated to your use. You have been there, *entre nous*, although you are not aware of the fact, since early in the evening. You only stepped out shortly after midnight to have some supper, and now you have another half-hour's toil before you. You do not grumble at the late hours. Nobody on the staff grumbles at them. He would be unworthy of his salt if he did complain; and quite as resigned to his fate as you dutifully are, is your able editor in his mysterious sanctum in some part of the establishment to which at present I do not intend particularly to refer.

It is a warm night, and you prefer to take off your coat and to fag in your shirt sleeves. That has been your custom for six nights every week for a great many years past. You are the foreign editor of the *Morning Mammoth*. To you have come and will continue to come almost incessantly-arriving envelopes containing foreign telegrams, now short, now lengthy; now consisting of only half a dozen lines, and now filling a couple of columns, of correspondence brimful of momentous intelligence from all parts of the globe. Some of the messages emanate from the great telegraphic agencies; others are from the *Mammoth's* resident correspondents in foreign capitals—wars and rumours of wars, the price of gold at San Francisco, the depreciation of the rupee at Calcutta, “corners” in pork and grain at Chicago and

in Erie Railroad shares at New York, coal miners' and ironworkers' strikes, a famine in Russia, a beer riot at Munich, a balloon accident at Rangoon, a kidnapping by brigands in Sicily, an anti-clerical demonstration at Rome, a horrible murder at Toowoomba, an attack on missionaries at Shanghai, a diplomatic ball at Peking, with a full explanation of the political motives which prompted the Russian Minister at the Chinese Court to have an attack of the measles on the very evening previous to the British Plenipotentiary's dance.

All these and five hundred other items of news from every corner of the civilised or savage world pass before you. You have on your table an immense pottle of hay, or rather of tissue paper scribbled all over with half-illegible characters, and the paper, to tell the truth, does not smell very sweetly. You have grown accustomed to the odour of telegrams long ago, and your skill and tried experience will enable you to extract the requisite amount of needles from the pottle aforesaid. You are an old hand at this kind of work. Before you elected to remain at home as foreign editor, you represented the *Mammoth* at Berlin, at Vienna, at Constantinople, at Madrid, at Rome, and in many other great Continental cities. You have been hand-in-hand with half the diplomatic corps and half the statesmen in twenty foreign centres, you speak half a dozen foreign languages, and you are, besides, an accomplished musician and have written two or three highly successful novels, to say nothing of a comic opera and a burlesque at the Gaiety.

Possibly a young gentleman with a handsome inde-

pendence and nothing to do would think your existence a terribly toilsome and not over-paid one, but somehow or another, you like the work, laborious as it is. Newspaper work has a strange fascination for those who give themselves up to it heart and soul, as a man should do to any work to which he intends definitely to set his hand. The career does not lead to much it offers indeed very few recompenses, either pecuniary or honorific, and although in these days journalists of the higher grade go into society and belong to Pall Mall Clubs, they can never be certain that the Duchess of Newington Butts is not pointing them out at the *Conversazione* to her friend, the Marchioness of Monmouth Street, as the "people who write"; while old General Groggy (retired) is anathematising the editor of the *Mastodon* as a "confounded cad" for not having inserted his one-and-a-half-columned letter complaining of the condition of the Cavalry Barracks at Walton-on-the-Naze, or stigmatising the author of the scathing leading article in the *Plesiosaurus* on Tommy Atkins's rations, as "a d——d penny-a-liner."

Those are the little rebuffs which journalists must be always prepared to encounter; as a rule, they laugh at them. Although they write for the most part anonymously, they are sustained and stimulated in their exertions by the possession of a certain influence much prized by the majority of mankind. "What do you sell here?" asked the Russian Prince Potemkin, when Matthew Boulton ushered the illustrious Muscovite through the great engine-shop at Soho, near Birmingham.

"We make and sell here," quoth the doughty partner of Watt, "that which all the world wants—POWER." It is the knowledge and the feeling that he is part of a gigantic engine, moving incessantly for the betterment of the world—that he wields a power to be exercised for good and not for evil—that not only give to the earnest journalist strength and resolution to accomplish his onerous task, but will make those duties positively delightful to him.

ONE A.M. AT THE *MORNING MAMMOTH*
NEWSPAPER OFFICE

PART III

SIR ISAAC NEWTON, when he was congratulated on the imperishable service which he had rendered to science, modestly likened himself to a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting himself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before him. I have not the slightest pretensions to scientific knowledge of any kind, nor am I aware of having rendered any appreciable service to anybody. Still—at an immensity of interval—I have so far followed Sir Isaac, in playing on the shore and diverting myself with a few smooth pebbles and pretty shells while the great ocean of Daily Journalism lay all undiscovered before me.

How is it all done? Who does it? You may open your eyes in genuine or feigned astonishment, or you may indulge in an incredulous sneer when you read these queries. If anybody should know all about the organisation of a great daily newspaper, it should surely

be the humble individual who addresses you. I have been toiling in the Philistine's mills and fighting wild beasts at Ephesus, journalistically speaking, for forty years; yet I have little more practical knowledge of how a great daily paper is carried on, than perhaps has the Honourable Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs, who receives her comfortable little cheque so punctually for recording the doings of patriotic society.

The Hon. Miss Skeggs brings or sends her manuscript—penned in a symmetrical Italian hand—to the newspaper-office, and in process of time she obtains handsome remuneration for her work. That is precisely my own case. I write a leading article and send it down to the office; and in due time, the labourer being deemed worthy of his hire, that hire I receive. In years gone by, when wars or rumours of wars were in the air, or when emperors and kings happened to get crowned, or married, or assassinated, or when there were International Exhibitions in foreign capitals, I used to make journeys abroad sometimes to a distance of many thousands of miles, and record my impressions of what I had seen. When the Royal Academy and the New Gallery open their doors for summer or winter exhibitions, I go to the private views; and occasionally I look in at the galleries of the Water-Colour Societies; while every Boxing night, when I am in England, I occupy a stall at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, to witness the performance of the grand Christmas pantomime; slip out of the theatre just after the "comic business" has

begun; write a column and a half not of criticism but of simple description, and go home tranquilly to bed.

That is what my own "connection with the press" amounts to. In my very early life that connection entailed the performance of somewhat more miscellaneous duties. I preserve the record of one working day, many years ago, when I was attached to a daily journal now defunct, which we may call the *Colossus of Rhodes*. Let me see, how much toil did I get through that far-off day between noon and 10 P.M.? I was living in an ancient mansion called Upton Court, near Slough. I used to come up every morning by the ten o'clock express. From Paddington to St. Clement's Church Yard, in a rapid hansom, took twenty-two minutes. I got into harness at once, and on the day cited I wrote two leaders, reviewed one of the late Laureate's poems, wrote half a column about a Talking Fish exhibited at the Egyptian Hall, and went to a public dinner in the evening; H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge in the chair. I never learned shorthand, I was never able even to take longhand notes of a speech: thus it was to my memory that I had to trust when I imparted to the readers next morning of the *Colossus of Rhodes* my impressions of the eloquence of the speakers on the previous evening, say, at Willis's Rooms, or at the Freemasons' Tavern.

It is precisely the circumstance of my knowledge of newspaper organisation being so extremely limited that has led me to dally with and dwell long on perhaps

half a dozen types of journalistic character, while so vast a field of newspaper economics lay all unobserved in the distance. Let my case serve as a warning to those sometimes too pretentious persons who publish books purporting to teach the rising journalist all the secrets of his craft. My own belief, from somewhat lengthened experience, is that there is not one living pressman who could completely and exhaustively enumerate and describe the attributes and functions of every department in an important newspaper; and that we who contribute to its columns, and have continued to contribute thereto for perhaps the best part of our lives, are so many wheels, or cogs, or pinions, or endless bands in a vast and complex machine, working, it is true, by our own zealous co-operations, but set in motion, guided, and controlled by influences and powers far beyond our sphere of observation, and very often wholly beyond our ken.

How, again I ask, is it all done? I have only been able to sketch, dimly and imperfectly, the aspects of the dramatic and operatic critics, the art critic, the foreign editor and the special war correspondent of the *Morning Mammoth*. That little portrait of the Hon. Miss Skeggs is, believe me, a wholly imaginary one. For aught I can tell, the contributor of the graphic paragraphs chronicling the latest fashionable weddings at St. George's, Hanover Square, the latest garden-party at Sennacherib House, or the lovely dresses worn at the Duchess of Dandlecourt's reception, may have proceeded from the pen of Captain Hugiois of the

Heavy Cavalry, unattached, or the Rev. Ebban Flow, one of the curates of St. Pogis-Underpump, E.C.

Why not? I have myself known in the flesh a cleric who was the editor of a monthly Fashion Magazine, and an ex-coal merchant who directed a bonnet-building establishment. In all kinds of press-work there is something of the mysterious; and the more or less rigid adoption of the anonymous tends to surround daily journalism especially with a mist or haze not very easy to penetrate. I have candidly told you that I live, myself, in a fog, touching many matters pertaining to my trade, and it is for that reason that I beg you, my readers, to beware of and to repose but a very slight measure of faith in the assertions of the pert young ladies and gentlemen who are so ready to inform you, at five-o'clock tea, that they write all the "padding" leaders in the *Griffinhoof Review*, that they are responsible for the musical critiques in the *Weekly Flyflapper*, and for the art notices in the *Ladies' Mile*, or that they are about to proceed to Sturm-und-Drangbad to describe the festivities to be held in honour of the golden wedding of the Grand Duke and Duchess of the interesting German principality in question.

Take, for example, that most capable and interesting body of gentlemen, the parliamentary reporters. What do I know about them? Scarcely anything. I was never in the reporters' gallery of either of the Houses in my life; and I have paid only a solitary visit to the Commons while sitting. On that occasion, owing to the courtesy of a distinguished member of the late Govern-

ment, I was allowed to take a seat under a gallery ; and there I sat for about half an hour in mortal fear of being at any moment hauled off my bench by the Sergeant-at-Arms, and handed over to the Metropolitan Police, for perpetual incarceration in the basement of the Clock Tower, for having inadvertently transgressed some rule or regulation of the Honourable House.

Yet, during that delightful but uneasy thirty minutes, my thoughts were much more absorbed by that reporters' gallery which I could discern far away in front than by the perfervid eloquence of an honourable gentleman with a voice like the sound of a coffee-mill in full action, who was grinding out a long series of observations about the Scotch law of Hypothec, or the woes of the crofters in the Isle of Wig, or the heraldic grievances of the Scottish Lion, or something entrancingly interesting of that kind. My thoughts were with the gentlemen in the high-up gallery, replacing each other at intervals, fagging at what must be practically both an intellectual and a physical treadmill. Is the reporters' gallery still that which it once was—a nursery for future chancellors, judges, statesmen, historians, and diplomatists ?

Are there any budding Campbells, Hazlitts, Payne Colliers, Charles Russells, William Howard Russells, Edward Clarkes, ascending or descending the steps leading to that tribune ? I am given to understand that nowadays the comfort of the scribes in the gallery is sedulously attended to by the authorities of the House, that they are treated with every possible

kindness and courtesy, and that altogether their lines are cast in pleasanter places than they were in the days when there was only scant and wretched accommodation in the gallery of the Commons for the reporters to transcribe their shorthand notes ; while in the House of Lords the wretched reporters of the debates had to perform their duties kneeling on the floor at the verge of the House, with their note-books on their knees, which note-books ill-conditioned officials occasionally took a malicious pleasure in kicking over as they passed—accidentally of course.

And how, I should like to know, do the reporters occupy themselves during the Parliamentary vacation ? Are they all engaged by the year, and devote their talents during the recess to writing reviews of books for the great organs of public opinion to which they are attached ; or are they only sessional reporters who, when the halls of St. Stephen are as desolate for nearly half the year as the walls of Balclutha, are free to utilise their great capacity by the delivery of lectures at suburban polytechnics, by stumping the provinces in a Conservative or a Liberal van, or by breaking-in Mexican mustangs or Australian buck-jumpers at Buffalo Bill's Wild West entertainment ?

Be it as it may, the Parliamentary reporters fulfil highly important duties, and their position in their profession is a distinctly recognised and honourable one. The members of the gallery, together with the general reporters of the provincial press, must constitute, I should say, the great bulk of that Institute of

Journalists which, thanks to the energy of Sir H. Gilzean Reid, is making such rapid strides, not only in professional, but in public, recognition and acceptance. There are also a large number of general reporters who have been in and out the offices of the *Morning Mammoth* all through this evening and night. The police-court chroniclers must have brought in their accounts, now terse and now formidably prolonged, of the cases heard at Bow Street and elsewhere. Who puts the lively, and sometimes comic, headings to the police reports? At Chicago, U.S.A., I was once told of a great local daily which retained on its staff a gentleman with the handsome remuneration of six thousand dollars a year, whose sole duty it was to affix headings, now humorous, now pathetic, now blood-curdling, not only to the police reports, but to articles of general information.

One exceptionally typical example of his skill in this particular direction was brought under my notice. It was a heading to a report of the examination of an individual who was in trouble with Justice for having entered no less than four times into the matrimonial state, without being a widower or having been divorced from any of his three preceding partners. Thus ran the remarkable epigraph: "The Bigamist Lies In His Lonely Cell, and His Four Poor Wives are Doing Quite Well." Now, I call that "fetching"; although, to be sure, to have been technically correct, the culprit with the four wives ought to have been called a "tetragamist."

Then there are the gentlemen who have looked in during the afternoon, and who have brought their voluminous or summary reports of a meeting of the Ladies' Guild for Advocating the Punishment of Penal Servitude for Criminals convicted of the Atrocious Crime of Breach of Promise of Marriage. Other reporters have sat at the feet of General Booth, while he was making his latest announcement that unless he received the sum of one hundred and eight thousand, four hundred and seven pounds, fifteen shillings and three farthings, by ten o'clock next Monday morning, the Submerged Tenth would go under for good. Others who arrive much later have attended the Annual Festival of the Home for Penitent Washerwomen; the Right Hon. the Earl of Soapsuds in the chair. Numerous noblemen, officers of high rank in the army and navy, judges and divines favoured the company with stirring specimens of their attainments as after-dinner speakers; but Admiral Gangway, K.C.B., will feel rather bad to-morrow; and General Halberts might be inclined to tear his hair—only he is quite bald—when they find that their lengthy prolusions on the grievances of the Services have been remorselessly cut down to half a dozen lines, or have been contemptuously snuffed out in the curt statement at the end of the report—"other toasts followed." And even in the instance of a distinguished speaker being reported at length, he is rarely satisfied when he reads his oration in the papers next morning. Those pestilent reporters may have changed the word "involved" into "evolved,"

or may have omitted to sprinkle one exceptionally well-received passage with "cheers," "loud cheers," or, if the speech has been a humorous one, "laughter."

Finally, I am wholly unable to make up mind as to whether a personage, once very familiar to me, is extant in these days of "New Journalism"; or whether he has vanished from the press-world. I mean the penny-a-liner. Strictly, the term itself is a misnomer, as the occasional reporter of all kinds of scraps and snippets of information was paid at the rate of one penny half-penny per printed line; but does the individual himself exist and retain his original status, or has he, like the so-called Bohemian of the present decade, become a masher, arrayed in the proper sable garb, with the due white cravat and the indispensable floweret at the buttonhole?

When I was young, the penny-a-liner, indefatigably industrious as he was, rarely represented the appearance of one who was a favourite of Fortune. He was, in truth, usually a seedy, grubby person, who for all his laboriousness seldom seemed to obtain any advancement in his calling. It is true, that a first-rate murder and plenty of additional "particulars" turning up morning after morning sometimes obtained for him a brief spell of worldly prosperity. I remember at the time of the murder of an Irish exciseman by that choice pair of rascals, George Frederick and Maria Manning—both of whom, by the way, I saw hanged over the gate of Horsemonger Lane Gaol—a penny-a-liner whose real name I have long since forgotten, but whom we used

to call "Ada the Betrayed," for the reason that he had once written a "penny dreadful" with the title just given, but which, after running through four successful numbers of the *Weekly Ghoul*, came to a sudden termination. The proprietor of the *Ghoul* eloped unawares to Texas, and "Ada the Betrayed," like Lord Ullin in the ballad, was "left lamenting."

The crime of the Mannings brought for a while splendid grist to "Ada's" mill. Prior to the discovery of the exciseman's corpse under the stones of the kitchen in Bermondsey, he had been a man all tattered and torn, but so soon as the remains of poor Patrick O'Connor had been identified through the dentist's number on the gold of the false teeth which he wore, the lucky reporter blossomed into a brand-new coat of Newmarket cut. New plaid pantaloons followed, a glossy silk hat shone upon his head, Wellington boots adorned his lower extremities, and the bows of a satin necktie floated on his chest. The only thing he lacked was a waistcoat; but alas! the Mannings were hanged ere "Ada the Betrayed" had secured that much-coveted vest, and afterwards, murders being rare, he drifted gradually into his old and normal condition of dismal seediness.

ONE A.M. AT THE *MORNING MAMMOTH*
NEWSPAPER OFFICE

PART IV

POSSIBLY you would like to know something, patient reader, of the gentlemen who write the leading articles in the half-dozen great daily newspapers of which the *Morning Mammoth* is one. But ere I venture to skate as gingerly as I can on that which may prove to be very thin ice, I should wish you to take a glimpse at a very old journalist, probably the first writer of what we call "racy," or "lively," or "spicy," or sometimes "sensational," leaders.

Behold a personage with long hair, curled moustaches, and short peaked beard. He wears a broad-brimmed slouched hat with a red plume in it, a stout doublet with a falling collar of old Mechlin lace, a broad embroidered belt crossing his breast and holding a very long rapier with a basket hilt, baggy nether garments, and boots of buff leather with very capacious bucket tops. This is Captain Marchant Needham, a most popular journalistic scribe in the reign of Charles I. Isaac Disraeli calls the Captain "the great patriarch of newspaper writers,

a man of versatile politics, a bold adventurer, and most successful, because the most profligate, of his tribe." From the university he came to London; was an usher at Merchant Taylors' School; then a clerk in the steward's office at Gray's Inn; studied physic and practised chemistry, and finally became a captain unattached; and, in the words of Anthony à Wood, "siding with the rout and scum of the people, made them weekly sport by railing at all that was noble in his Intelligencer called *Mercurius Britannicus*." The captain broke with his first friends, the Presbyterians; had an audience on his knees with the king, was reconciled to His Majesty, and showed himself a violent Royalist in a newspaper called the *Mercurius Pragmaticus*, in which he daily mauled the Roundheads with his quips and quirks.

But some time afterwards, when the popular party prevailed, the mercurial captain again changed his views, and, being "got at" by President Bradshaw, became once more a virulent Presbyterian and lashed the Cavaliers outrageously in his *Mercurius Politicus*. At length, at the Restoration, the captain, becoming conscious of the existence of such a place as Tyburn and such a thing as a halter, judiciously removed himself to Holland. But having scraped together some money, he paid it to a hungry courtier, and obtained a pardon under the Great Seal. He ended his days as a physician, and it is to be hoped that he did not slay so many patients with his prescriptions as he had slain political opponents with his goose-quill.

Here you have a terse, but, I should say, veracious portrait, of the thoroughly unscrupulous, personally disreputable, but altogether capable, all-round journalist of the past. We have glimpses of Captain Marchant Needham throughout the eighteenth century. Sometimes he was a captain unattached, sometimes a doctor of physic, and occasionally a doctor of divinity. He wrote fluently, indefatigably, vehemently, for the party which paid him best; and, on the whole, although from time to time he suffered for his outspokenness by standing in the pillory, his life was not a much more chequered one than that led by the majority of hack-writers of the period.

It is sufficiently curious, however, to find that Oliver Goldsmith, who, for all his genius and his accomplishments, never entirely passed out of the hack stage, once apologised to the public for having degraded himself by writing in the columns of a newspaper. While, still more edifying to relate, that exemplary character, the Rev. Laurence Sterne, the author of two imperishable contributions to English literature, the *Sentimental Journey* and *Tristram Shandy*, who was besides about as arrant a rascal as ever cheated the gallows, tells us in the fragment of his autobiography that his uncle, James Sterne, Prebendary of York, was once on very good terms with him, but he quarrelled with him afterwards because he would not write paragraphs in the newspapers. "He was a party man," adds Laurence loftily; "I was not, and detested such dirty work, thinking it beneath me."

In any case, it is tolerably certain that the discreditable and unscrupulous leading-article writer of the Marchant Needham type has almost entirely disappeared from the world of modern journalism, and it is worth curious observation that what I may call the elevation and purification of the leading columns of the London press have been due in a very great measure to the influence of English poets of high standing. Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Thomas Moore were for a lengthened period contributors, the first to the *Morning Post*, and the second to the *Morning Chronicle*, and occasionally to the *Times*. Leigh Hunt, harmonious versifier and even more melodious writer of prose, was the editor and the chief leader-writer of the weekly journal called the *Examiner*, founded by him in conjunction with his brother John.

In that remarkable paper, the author of the *Legend of Florence*, who was one of the earliest writers in advocacy of Parliamentary reform, and who yet was personally unacquainted with such leaders of the Reform party as Sir Francis Burdett, Major Cartwright, and Thomas Francis Place, and who hated Cobbett, gathered around him a band of admirable prose writers—Charles Lamb, William Hazlitt, with Benjamin Robert Haydon, the painter, who could write most vigorous prose, to say nothing of such poetical allies as Byron and Shelley. It is well known, moreover, that the author of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* was once on the verge of starting a daily newspaper of which Leigh Hunt was to be the editor. The noble Childe, however,

to judge from his letters on the subject, seemed to be of the opinion that a newspaper editor should be a kind of Olympian Jove, who should look upon his staff pretty much as Zeus might be expected to look upon a small congregation of black beetles. Ultimately the project of the Byronic daily was relinquished, but, as a compromise, a monthly magazine entitled the *Liberal* was started. It was edited in Italy, and being found somewhat unsuitable to the latitude of Fleet Street, was soon abandoned. I picked up the first number of the *Liberal* once in a twopenny box at a book-stall.

The poets, I am glad to say, have not by any means severed their connection with the daily and weekly London press. If you had been here at 1 o'clock this afternoon, you would have found in the Council Chamber of the *Morning Mammoth* newspaper a brace of very eminent poets indeed. You would have seen a middle-aged, middle-sized gentleman, somewhat resembling the late Anthony Trollope in appearance, with a beard almost as ample as that of Earl Spencer, and with blue spectacles. He has been writing leading articles in the *Mammoth* for at least thirty years—leaders on almost every conceivable subject—home and foreign politics, Indian finance, literature, art, archæology, Oriental languages, breach of promise of marriage, intemperance, the fashions, the drama, Church congresses, bi-metallism, electro-biology, horticulture, yachting, and the price of salmon in Billingsgate market. It is one of the peculiarities of modern journalism that subjects which two generations since were only dealt with in weekly and monthly

magazines, or in the *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh Reviews*, are now habitually treated in the columns of the daily press, and among the all-round leader-writers who can be asked at five minutes' notice to pen a column and a quarter on any one of the topics which I have mentioned, and on five hundred topics besides, the middle-aged gentleman with the flowing beard and blue spectacles can at once be confidently reckoned upon to respond to the appeal.

How he does it passes my comprehension. I have peeped into his room at the *Morning Mammoth* office—a very plainly furnished apartment, and with no more extensive library of reference than a dog's-eared copy of Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Liddell and Scott's great Greek Lexicon, Whitaker's Almanack, and the *Child's Guide to Knowledge*. Stay, I think in a corner there is a copy of the Koran, in Arabic, and Magnall's Questions. This Caliph of leading-article writers is Sir Charles Launcelot Greaves Grandison, M.A., K.B.U.C., L.P.P., X.Y.Z. Notwithstanding the many thousands of leaders which have rippled from his pen, he has found leisure enough to compose those wondrous epic poems *Buddha's Tooth*, *The Rape of Bramah's Lock*, the *Courtship of Confucius*, the *Mystery of Mungo Jumbo*, and the *Sacred Blade Bone*, the last immortal poem having for its basis that marvellous bone of a shoulder of mutton on which, as is well known, the prophet Mahomet wrote many chapters of the Koran as dictated to him by the Superior Authorities.

And, again, wonderful to record, Sir Charles Launcelot

Greaves Grandison has had time to travel repeatedly to the uttermost ends of the earth. He is on terms of familiar friendship with the Great Mogul, the Emperor Prester John, the Mikado, the President of the United States, the Grand Llama of Thibet, and the King of the Cannibal Islands, and wheresoever he journeys the affability of Sir Charles's manner, and the charm of his conversation, make him a general favourite.

But you are not to imagine—oh dear no!—that Sir Charles is the only poet of whom the *Morning Mammoth* can boast. At the council of the editorial staff at 1 P.M. there was present that well-known writer of satirical poems, eloquent essayist, and, it is to be hoped, English historian of the future, Hercules Demetrius Tetraglotton, D.C.L., who, although he bears in face and even garb a striking resemblance to a Lazarist missionary, is the most jovial soul imaginable, full in his unoccupied moments of mirth and glee. He sings a very good song too, and, I have heard, surpasses many mashers in the difficult art of leading the cotillon.

Round the corner is the *Daily Megatherium* office. They also have a poet who is as accomplished in prose as he is in verse. This gifted creature is Roderick Dhu Ironshanks. At once I must indignantly denounce, as malevolently apocryphal, the insinuation which I have more than once seen in print that Roderick never sits down to write a leader without arraying himself in the garb of old Gaul, and that his brightest essays are composed when he has his dirk between his teeth. As stupidly mendacious is the rumour that when he has

concluded the peroration of his article he indulges in a right good Highland fling, accompanied by cries of "Heugh!" At any rate, there are few leading-article writers who have so many varied accomplishments, and such indefatigable industry, as Roderick Dhu Ironshanks.

It is difficult to tell at which topic he is best. Some prefer him as a critic on Ossian, others think that he is most impressive when dealing with Norse mythology, but personally I admire him most when, in the course of a column and one-eighth, he has contrived to hold forth, always wittily and always wisely, say, on Columella's Husbandry, the Institutes of Gaius, the Pandects of Justinian, the Lost Odes of Sappho, the Satires of Saronides, and the Fairy Tales of Mother Goose. Yet another writer of leading articles who in his spare moments cultivates the Muse, and cultivates her, too, with brilliant success, is attached to the staff of the *Morning Mastodon*. Runymede Orson is the sternest of political writers. Controversial theology is another of his strong points, and there are few living journalists so well versed as he is in the differential and integral calculus and the theory of fluxions. He is a member of the Psychical Society, and plays sweetly on the banjo.

It must be owned that, among the contributors of leaders to the daily press, the poets of the first rank do not number more than a dozen. On the other hand, I think I can point out to you at least a score who are profound classical and Oriental scholars; others who have seen service in the Army and Navy, and a few

who have taken clerical orders. The sporting leading-article writer is another type who, when occasion serves, might be described in detail. I could write a whole column, for example, about the Hon. Plantagenet Beaulieu, Lord Boscoville's younger brother. Does the Hon. Plantagenet know anything practical about the turf? I should say that most assuredly he knows a great deal about it, seeing that, about thirty years ago, he lost ninety thousand pounds sterling in horse racing, mainly in connection with an animal called "Hand-in-your-Pocket," which was first favourite at some Derby, the date of which I have forgotten, but which failed to win the race, the blue ribbon of the turf being won on the occasion in question by an entirely "dark horse" called "Smouche."

The Hon. Plantagenet "paid up and looked pretty." He subsequently, I have been told, held high military rank in the service of the Gaikwar of Jagurrath, the popular potentate Ash Lungara Chasleeda, who habitually sits on a crystal throne, specially manufactured for His Highness by Messrs. Mortlock, and who is said to be exceedingly fond of Bass's bottled beers. Leaving the Rajah's service, in which he had attained the grade of Grand Serang, the Hon. Plantagenet, like Prince Rupert of yore, devoted himself to the exciting pursuit of naval warfare, and was appointed by the South American Republic of Sanquebrado to command the armoured cruiser, *Buscapies*, in which he bombarded and almost entirely destroyed the capital of the Republic of Sanvaquero. After that I

think he was a blockade-runner during the American Civil War, but he turned up smiling at the office of the *Morning Mammoth* some twenty-five years ago, and has since achieved immense, although anonymous, popularity as a writer on sporting subjects, not only as regards the present, but in relation to the past history of racing. He has known Admiral Rous, Lord George Bentinck, the Earl of Winchelsea, Sir Joseph Hawley, and many other patriarchs of the turf, intimately. He can enumerate without book the names of all the winners of the Derby and the St. Leger since the beginning of the century, and can minutely trace the pedigree of the Coffin Mare, the Godolphin Arabian, and Eclipse. More than all this, he possesses an exact knowledge of all the Arab chargers ridden by Napoleon the Great; and he treasures at home one of the hoofs of the Duke of Wellington's horse Copenhagen, richly mounted in gold, as a snuff-box.

Some years ago, my very old and esteemed friend, the late Mr. Edmund Yates, in the prospectus for an evening paper called the *Cuckoo* which he was about to start, expressed the opinion that English newspaper readers had had quite enough and to spare of the old-fashioned leading article, which he elegantly likened to a broad-wheeled wagon lumberingly sticking in the ruts of a highway too often traversed. According to Edmund, satiety had set in with regard to the leading articles of a column and a quarter long, and its surcease had become a matter of public expediency. In setting forth these views, the astute founder of the *Cuckoo*—

which did not, by the way, have a very protracted existence—practically sounded the first trumpet-blast of what is now called “the New Journalism.” His idea of a leader was a lively, sparkling, fetching paragraph, all fruit and no rind, and not exceeding, at the very utmost, twenty lines in length ; and with such paragraphs he proposed to fill the space then occupied by three or four column and a quarter leaders which the great diurnals then almost invariably submitted to their noble armies of readers. When Mr. Yates tried himself the experiment of lively leaderettes instead of lengthy leaders the results in the *Cuckoo* were hardly successful, but the paragraph leader has since obtained almost universal acceptance in daily and evening journalism, while as regards the morning papers, the old-fashioned lengthy leaders still hold their own side by side with the spicy paragraphs, and show no signs of fading into extinction.

EIGHT P.M. DINNER AT THE QUEEN'S
GUARD, ST. JAMES'S

PERSONS who are almost incessantly working very hard have a curious propensity for indulging in day dreams in which they mentally draw up elaborate schemes for composing amusing little books which they mean to write some day, when they have a modicum of leisure; and so they go on dreaming and scheming, and toiling and moiling, till at length the Night cometh when no man can work, and there is an end of them, their labours, and their vain imaginings.

Among the many plans which I have long since elaborated in my mind and carefully tied up, docketed, and consigned to their proper imaginary pigeon-holes, I will mention just ten. "A Dictionary of Biography of Cooks in all Countries and in all Ages"; "Old Clothes—being an Account of the Garments worn at all Periods of the Career of Napoleon Bonaparte, sometime Emperor of the French and King of Italy, called the Great, and Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington and Prince of Waterloo"; "Subjects for Pictures which have hitherto been unaccountably neglected by Painters"; "The History of the Beggar's Opera and the Manners

and Customs of the Time when that Work was written"; "A History of English Domestic Servants from the time when Tusser wrote his *Five Hundred Points of Husbandry* to the Present Day"; "Memoirs of Remarkable Dancing Masters, and the Dances which they taught"; "Italy in England, an Account of Italians domiciled in, or visiting this Country from the Days of the Mercenaries imported into this Country in the time of the Tudors to the Invasion of London by the Vendors of Penny Ices"; "A History of Ghosts, Ancient and Modern"; "The Story of the London Police Courts, from the time of Henry Fielding to that of Montagu Williams"; finally, "The Typical Dinners of the British Metropolis."

Of such repasts I feel confident that, if I had time and opportunity to rummage those pigeon-holes afore-said, I could describe at least fifty. But chiefly would I like to behold you as a guest at one of the military dinners of which I proudly believe London has an unquestioned monopoly. Even the ordinary regimental mess is an institution which does not seem to flourish to any perceptible extent abroad. It is a British institution and will not grow on foreign soil. The Emperor Napoleon III., towards the close of his reign, strove to introduce the mess system in the garrison of Paris; and the officers of one of the regiments of the Imperial Guard were officially encouraged to take their repasts in common. They could not, however, obtain dining accommodation in their barracks; so they patronised the Restaurant Lucas, in a street somewhere near the Madeleine. I recollect it as an establishment

with a sanded floor, and renowned for a particular *sauce verte* or bright green sauce which was served with boiled salmon. Still the martial Gauls never took kindly to gregarious messing, and the reason for the failure of the institution in France was and is the somewhat sulky social as well as military superiority claimed by foreign officers of field rank over their inferiors in grade.

A French colonel may ask even the youngest of his subalterns to dinner, but he rarely condescends to sit down at the festive board on socially equal terms with them. The majors, to a certain extent, look down on the captains, who, on their side, turn up their noses, socially, at the lieutenants, and these last, for their part, snub the *sous-lieutenants* when they have a chance for so doing. Thus, as a rule, the officers of each grade lunch and dine with companions of their own precise military rank, and foregather in the particular restaurant which each grade may elect to patronise.

You know very well how vastly different is the British military practice. The fact of the commanding officer of an English regiment tranquilly plying his knife and fork at the same table with all the officers under his command does not, to the slightest extent, diminish the deferential respect which is shown by the juniors to the seniors. But it is not a mess, properly so called, to which for the nonce I am about to introduce you. It is to one of the dinners nightly partaken of by officers of Her Majesty's Household Brigade, stationed in the Metropolis, who happen to be on guard to-night, that I venture to introduce you. A bounteous

provision for a nightly symposium of these scarlet-clad warriors is annually made in the Parliamentary Estimates, and the dinners take place in a room specially set apart for the purpose at St. James's Palace. Again, at the Tower of London, where I often used to dine years ago—I think in the Beauchamp Tower—there is a dinner for the officer on guard. Thirdly, at the Bank of England, the officer on guard is hospitably entertained at the cost of the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street herself; the rank and file of the Bank Guards being also provided with supper and, unless I am mistaken, with a small gratuity in "white money."

I have dined, too, in the by-gones with the Blues and the Life Guards First and Second, in their mess-room at the Horse Guards', but whether that banquet has been discontinued, or whether the cavalry officers on guard come down to St. James's to refect, I am not quite certain. The cavalry dinners that I remember were quite typical, and a military curiosity in their way. Your gallant hosts dined in their dressing-gowns and their buckskins, and when there was a call for duty, it was your pleasant privilege to accompany the officer by whom you had been invited to his dressing-room where, with the assistance of his soldier-servant and your own willingly helping hand, he was in an astonishingly short space of time arrayed in all the sumptuous panoply of full uniform—jack boots, spurs, back and breast-plates, gauntlets, plumed casque, sabre and all.

There will be nothing exciting in the scene which you will behold to-night. The small group of officers

on guard at the Royal Palaces are privileged to invite a few visitors, for whom, of course, evening dress is *de rigueur*. You sit down at 8 and you are amicably turned out at 11 P.M. The officers themselves are in full uniform, and you may see their bearskins lying on the mantelpiece of the dining saloon as a silent reminder that they are ready, aye ready, for the call of duty. The only difficulty which I experience in piloting you to the particular apartment in which you are to meet the Queen's Guard, lies in the fact that to discover the mess-room is, to a nervous and purblind individual, a task beside which threading the Maze at Hampton Court is comparatively light and facile. Built on no particular plan, but continually patched and cobbled up and pieced out at various periods ever since the time of Henry VIII., and, for aught I know, since the period when St. James's itself was an hospital for lepers, the palace in its exterior has become a very labyrinth.

It is fully a quarter of a century since I dined with the Queen's Guard, and I have altogether forgotten whether they regale in some chamber leading out of the Colour Court, the Ambassadors' Court, or the Stable Yard. So I must apologise to you for rambling and straggling about and harking back from court to court, and colonnade to colonnade in vain attempts to find the proper portal of ingress in a bewildering congeries of buildings, every one of which seems to have more doors than windows. I "ask a policeman," and he courteously directs me whither I should bend my steps, but alas! after five minutes' more wandering we are

brought up sharp, by a dead wall. Then we ask another policeman, who with equal courtesy replies, "First turning to the right, second to the left, then turn sharp to the right again and go straight on." The result of this fresh peregrination brings us well out into Cleveland Row, and the agonised impression comes over us that we shall be at least ten minutes too late for dinner. Fortunately, just on re-entering the palace precincts, we see an open door, revealing a well-lighted staircase. We make a dart for it, and are informed by a servant that this is the haven which we have so long sought for in vain. We are only five minutes after the appointed tryst.


We are, nevertheless, the last of the invited guests, most of whom are military men in evening mufti, and dutifully observant of the inexorable exigencies of "military time." However, there is no harm done, and you sit down to a capital dinner, quietly and deftly served, which it would be impertinent to describe in detail. I leave you to enjoy it, and the excellent dry champagne, and the coffee, and the liqueurs, the cigars, and the cigarettes afterwards; to say nothing of the pleasant flow of merry and cultured talk which, strange to relate, turns neither on military "shop" nor on horse-racing; but while I see that you are being taken sedulous care of by your individual host, and I am thoroughly enjoying the polite attentions paid me by the gallant officer who has been kind enough to invite me, I cannot help falling, over a medium Havana, into what I may call a Scarlet Study.

It is a spacious, comfortable, handsomely but not luxuriously decorated apartment in which we are enjoying ourselves. I recognise on the dinner-table some massive silver-gilt plate, profusely ornamented with effigies of the Sphynx, which seems to bear with it reminiscences of the Egyptian Campaign of 1801. I recognise also as an old acquaintance a richly-mounted snuff-box, fashioned from a horse's hoof. The hoof of Sir Ralph Abercromby's war-horse, or that of the charger of Napoleon the Great? Which charger? the Corsican rode so many. Tell us, Hon. Francis Lawley. Yet in spite of their well-remembered paraphernalia, I rub my eyes from time to time and gaze around and upwards in some slight bewilderment. Can it be the same room? No. Your kindly host hastens to explain to you that it is *not* the same apartment. It has been enlarged, or rather rebuilt, by Her Majesty's Office of Works, and is quite an "up-to-date" saloon.

Then, when I look around upon our stalwart, comely entertainers, full of youth, and life, and gaiety, my Study in Scarlet takes me very many years back, and to another generation of Celtic Guardsmen, one as stalwart and comely, as youthful and vivacious, as these. Five-and-twenty, six-and-twenty, seven-and-twenty years ago, I used to be the frequent guest of the officers of the self-same historic regiment whose hospitality I am now enjoying. But it was not only here, at St. James's, at the Tower, or at the Bank, but also far away beyond the broad Atlantic. I have called the regiment, by your leave, the Celtic Guards. I first made their

acquaintance at Montreal, in Lower Canada, in the winter of 1863. The regiment had a regular mess-room, not in their barracks, but at Hogan's Hotel, a huge caravansary, ugly, but extremely comfortable. It has long since, I suppose, been swept away to make room for some vaster and more palatial hotel. Canada, at the time of which I speak, was full of British troops. The Civil War in the States was at its height; and the capture of the Confederate Commissioners Slidell and Mason on board a British mail steamer on the high seas by an American man-of-war had nearly brought the two greatest nations in the world into hostile collision. The Bomb Shell Guards, as well as the Celtic, were in garrison at Montreal, and held their mess at a house in Jacques Cartier Square.

The Rifle Brigade were stationed at a town called Hamilton; regiments of infantry, among the officers of one of which was my old friend Captain Hawley Smart, now a writer dearly beloved by all readers of "breezy" novels, were in garrison at Quebec; and a large number of British staff officers, who have since become famous, were in Canada—not just yet the Dominion—at that momentous time. Specially do I remember to have met a Colonel Jervois, an officer of the Royal Engineers, who had been sent by Lord Palmerston to our American dependencies, to report on the fortifications of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. A very lively, observant, alert Lieutenant-Colonel of Engineers was he. The last time that I had the honour to meet him was at Wellington, New Zealand; and he had become



His Excellency Lieutenant-General Sir William Francis Drummond Jervois, G.C.M.G., C.B., F.R.S., Governor of New Zealand.

I found him in 1885 as alert, as observant, as lively, and as kindly and hospitable as ever. This Study in Scarlet is surely waking up strange memories. Straight my mind goes, not to an imaginary but to a real pigeon-hole, or rather a drawer in a large bureau which I have at home; a bureau of American manufacture which we call the "Adjutant-General," for it holds a thousand and one objects pertaining to our craft, which can all be arranged with mathematical precision. From that drawer, when I get home to-night, I will take a little visiting-card bearing the engraved superscription, "Major Wolseley," and a line in pencil, "Come and dine to-night. Eight. Notre Dame Street." Another little gentleman, alert, lively, observant, and with brains all over his body, just as frogs are said to have. He is now Field-Marshal General Viscount Wolseley, with half the letters of the alphabet as honorific initials appended to his name. Hold, enough! I must place a curb on my memories of the past.

They crowd too thickly around me. There is only one more name which I will cite in association with Canada in 1863-64. At Quebec once, dining at the table of Lord Monk, then Governor-General of Canada, I remember that there was among the guests another officer of Engineers who struck me as being a slightly morose and *distract* gentleman, although from time to time he would burst out in fluent eloquent talk. The

name of this officer was Gordon—Charles George Gordon—the Gordon who served in the trenches before Sebastopol, and who afterwards was to be known as Chinese Gordon, and to die a cruel but an immortally glorious death at Khartoum.

It is a very unmannerly thing, we all know, to look a gift horse in the mouth, but I, an inveterate old digger and delver among the dry bones of the past, would have liked to ask my host something about the genesis and the present constitution of the Queen's Guard dinner. Was it in any way looked after by that august, but somewhat occult body, the Board of Green Cloth, which I have read in old books has an exempt jurisdiction, and is presided over by the Lord Steward of the Household, who formerly was judge of a special tribunal which possessed the power to try all treason, murders, felonies, assaults, and other offences committed in the palace, or on the verge thereof? Among the pleasant functions of this Board was the controlling of the immense Royal kitchen in St. James's Palace in which, in the good old times—before the Right Hon. Edmund Burke took it into his head to scrutinise the expenditure of the Civil List, and to denounce the exorbitance of the great army of cooks, foolish, fat scullions, yeomen of the mouth, yeomen tasters, rat-catchers, herb-women, and cock-crowers, attached, with comfortable salaries, to the Royal Household—were prepared not only the repasts of the members of the Royal family resident in the palace, but likewise every day a large number of dinners which were distributed

among bodies or individuals directly or indirectly connected with the Court.

In that immense kitchen, roasting, boiling, baking, stewing, broiling, and frying, seemed never to come to an end. The Royal chaplains, in particular, had a bounteous table laid for them every day in one of the out quarters in the palace ; but even in the spendthrift days there were a few reformers of the Edmund Burke way of thinking, who remonstrated with the king on the lavish expenditure involved in the entertainment daily of the reverend hungry and thirsty gentlemen in cassocks and bands, who waxed fat upon the hospitality of the Crown. King Charles promised to see about the matter with a view to retrenchment ; and in order to see how things really stood, he took his seat one day at the chaplains' table. Grace was said, and, according to the tradition, it was the witty Dr. South who was in the chair. Instead of using the regular formula "God save the King and bless our dinner," he transposed the verbs, saying, "God bless the King and save our dinner." The Merry Monarch laughed and the dinner was saved, but only for a season.

THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW

THE Lord Mayor's Show is, to those who have any business to transact between Westminster and Tower Hill on the 9th of November, an unmitigated nuisance ; and when I am in London on that day, I am scrupulous in keeping the festival precisely as I keep the four Bank Holidays with which the Metropolis is annually afflicted ; that is to say, I take care not to stir out of doors between daybreak and nightfall. But the procession undeniably affords delight to many scores of thousands of sightseers ; and I would not willingly rob anybody of even the smallest pleasure. I should be very sorry to see the Lord Mayor's Show abolished. It is the only pageant which, in London at least, we have retained to remind us of mediæval times. Occasionally shabby, and rarely without some element of the grotesque in it, nevertheless it is sufficiently handsome, stately, and picturesque to amuse the vast crowd in the streets and interest the ladies and children at the windows ; and if only for these reasons the function should be piously preserved for the recreation of the population of the biggest, and, on the whole, the dullest, capital in the world.

Again, glibly as some people talk about the necessity for Municipal Reform, and bluntly as Lord Rosebery may dilate on the admirable work which is being done west of the Griffin—which is in reality a Dragon—by the London County Council, I hold most strongly that not one whit of comeliness, stateliness, and splendour should be taken from the Lord Mayor's Show, inasmuch as it always has been and always will be, I hope, an annual assertion of the principle of the monarchy of the middle classes and an outward and visible symbol of the power and influence of the oldest, the most dignified, and the most hospitable municipal corporation in the world.

Yet does it strike me that the 9th of November is precisely *not* the day when the Conscript Fathers of the City should proceed in triumphal procession from Guildhall to the New Law Courts, and return to the palace of Gog and Magog to entertain Her Majesty's Ministers, the Judges, the Corps Diplomatique, and a goodly company of citizens, male and female, at a grand and sumptuous banquet.

The earliest civic show on record is said to have taken place in 1236, when Henry III. and Eleanor of Provence passed through the City to Westminster; and when Edward I. came back from Palestine, the citizens, in a frenzy of loyalty, threw handfuls of gold and silver out of the windows among the crowd. A comfortable sight to have seen! Would I had been there! It was on the return of the same monarch from his Scotch campaign that what would appear to have been the

first Lord Mayor's Show was visible. Each Guild had its display. The Fishmongers had gilt salmon and sturgeon, drawn by eight horses, and six-and-forty knights riding sea-horses, followed by the effigy of St. Magnus, it being St. Magnus's Day. Was that the 9th of November? I trow not.

For very many generations the day after the feast of St. Simon and St. Jude, that is to say, the 29th of October, was that on which the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs went by water to Westminster, attended by the barges of all the Companies, and on their return landed at Paul's Wharf, where they took horse, and, with much pomp, passed through "the great street of the City, called Cheapside." The road was kept clear by beadles and men apparelled as "divells," together with wild, stout varlets, whose clubs discharged squibs and crackers. In Queen Elizabeth's time, the Lord Mayor was clothed on Show Day in a long scarlet gown, with a black velvet hood, and a rich collar of gold about his neck. Then came the Aldermen, and last, the two Sheriffs, who enjoyed then, even as they do now, the proud privilege of paying for half of the Guildhall banquet.

There was apparently no speech-making at the Tudor Municipal feasts, for immediately after dinner the whole company adjourned to evening prayers at St. Paul's Cathedral—a most wholesome practice. In the evening, however, there were more revels, and there were even discourses; only the oratory proceeded from hired performers arrayed in fantastic garb, supposed to

impersonate the Moral Virtues. They were unanimous in assuring the Chief Magistrate that he was only a little lower than the angels; and, I have no doubt, heartily enjoyed their subsequent supper. It is most irritating after you have been toiling through the old books about the Lord Mayor's Show to find so very few notices of the exact day when the pageant and the banquet took place; in fact, it is not until you get to the altogether trustworthy pages of Pepys that you begin to see land in this respect.

It was on the 29th of October in the Restoration year, 1663, being Lord Mayor's Day, and Sir Anthony Bateman being Lord Mayor, that Mr. Pepys hied him citywards. The tailor had just sent him home his new velvet cloak—that is lined with velvet; the outside was cloth—but the frugal Samuel refrained from wearing the glorified garment, “because of the crowd.” So, plainly attired, he went to Guildhall, where he met “Lieutenant-Colonel Baron, a City Commander”—possibly of the Finsbury Archers or the Lumber Troop—who took him into the hall and showed him the tables set for the banquet. Under every salt-cellar there was a bill of fare and the waiters were marshalled in military array at the end of each table.

The diarist noted it as “very strange” that only for the Mayor and the Lords of the Privy Council were there any napkins or any knives, to say nothing of forks, provided. Fancy having to bring your knife and fork with you when you went to dine at Guildhall!

This somewhat barbarous practice appears to have prevailed for at least a hundred years afterwards; for, looking carefully at a contemporary engraving of a banquet at Guildhall, in 1761, when Lord Mayor Sir Samuel Fludyer had the honour to entertain George III. and Queen Charlotte, I cannot discern on the well-laid tables anything in the shape of a knife or a fork. Oddly enough, the artist has drawn the guests, from Royalty downwards, duly seated at the magnificently spread board, but none of them appear to be eating, and there is not so much as a glass or a decanter to be seen on the tables. Possibly, the company were waiting for the signal to rise for grace to be said, and then producing their knives and forks from their pockets, they must have fallen to with the keenest of appetites. That eventually something to drink was served out I surmise from the figure in the distance of a waiter with a very large wig, who is holding a wine glass on a platter.


Fortunately, the bill of fare of this exceptionally handsome banquet has come down to us; and it is truly interesting to learn from the *menu* that the first service comprised venison, turtle soup, and fish of every sort, among which figured mullets, turbot, and tench. Who eats tench now? The second service was composed of teal, quails, ortolans, ruffs, reeves, notts, pea-chicks, snipe, partridges, and pheasants. For the third service, there were vegetables and made dishes, green peas, green morellas, green truffles, ducks' tongues, and "fat livers." After all, gastronomy does

not seem to have made any very great progress since the first year of the reign of good King George III. Indeed, in many instances, it is to be feared that the art has degenerated. For all the wonderful acceleration of locomotion due to railroads and steam navigation which we enjoy at present, English epicures can very rarely nowadays regale on such delicacies as green truffles; and while, as you have seen, Sir Samuel Fludyer's guests impaired their digestions with *foie gras*, just as a Lucullus of 1892 might do, they likewise titillated their palates with ducks' tongues—a dainty which I apprehend is a stranger to the modern *cuisine*.

There was a fourth course at this luxurious "feed," in which were introduced "curious ornaments in pastry, jellies, and blomonges." In all, not including the dessert, there were placed on the tables four hundred and fourteen dishes, hot and cold. Roast beef is not specifically mentioned in the programme, but it was doubtless abundant, and of right old English flavour. The wines were varied and copious; and the contemporary chronicler tells us that "champagne and burgundy were to be had everywhere, and nothing was so scarce as water." The drinking of toasts seems to have commenced before the dinner was finished. The Common Crier, standing before the Royal table, called for silence, and then proclaimed aloud that their Majesties drank to the health and prosperity of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council of the City of London.

Immediately afterwards, this same Crier, who appears to have fulfilled the functions performed in our days by Toole, Harker, and other noted civic toastmasters, gave the toast of health, long life, and prosperity to the King and Queen. Nothing is said of the passing round of the loving cup; and so soon as the banquet was over, the Royal party retired to the Council Chamber, where they took tea. The remaining guests were not suffered to stay and take t'other bottle; the Guildhall being at once occupied by a horde of carpenters. The tables were carried out, the dais recarpeted, and the whole gigantic apartment got ready for the ball, with which the festivities were to conclude. The Royalties having returned and seated themselves under the canopy, the ball was opened by the Duke of York and the Lady Mayoress. Another minuet followed, danced by the younger branches of the Royal Family with ladies of distinction, and the illustrious guests took their departure at midnight; but there was a tremendous amount of confusion in Guildhall Yard; and their Majesties had to wait fully half an hour before their coach could be brought to the door.

They did not get back to St. James's till 2 in the morning; and, in turning under the gate of the Clock Tower, the coachman managed to run his horses into a sentry-box, the wooden roof of which smashed one of the glasses of the coach. Possibly the coachman and many other of his tribe, including the footman and the link-bearers, had been drinking the health of the young King and Queen slightly too often in the course of the



evening. It is amusing to note that the Dowager Princess of Wales, who also had to wait a wearisome time for the arrival of her equipage, lost her temper, and could not be persuaded to retire again into the Hall. If one compares this statement with a most diverting description given by Mrs. Delany of a grand city dinner at Guildhall, at which she was present when she was Mrs. Pendarves, quite a young woman, early in the reign of George I., it would appear that it was rather the custom than otherwise for unconscionable delays to occur in getting up the carriages at the end of the banquet, and that nervous ladies who shrank from encountering a noisy and usually dirty mob, or who doubted the sobriety of their own servants, not unfrequently made a night of it in Guildhall itself, and found improvised sleeping accommodation where they could.

A dinner at Guildhall on Lord Mayor's Day at the present time differs very widely from the banquet of the past. For more than a hundred years, it is true, the caterers for the guests of the Mayor and Sheriffs' "feed" have been the historic firm of Birch; but the modern dinner may be described as a superstructure of the most elegant and artistic cookery, resting, however, on amazingly strong pillars of cold roast beef. In the cosmogony of the Hindus, the globe is symbolised as supported by an elephant, which stands on a tortoise; but what the tortoise itself stands upon, the cosmogonists have failed to tell us. The civic world, I apprehend, might be emblematised as poised on a very fat ox which stands on a fine West Indian turtle, while the turtle itself

might repose on a pile of those civic charters which Charles II. had the impudence and the meanness to confiscate for a time, but which have been long since restored to the City, and will never, I hope, be taken away so long as London remains the capital of the British Empire and of the world.

I have eaten, I should say, the turtle of some twenty-three Lord Mayors, although it has not always been on the 9th of November that I have enjoyed the Chief Magistrate's hospitality. So far as I can judge, the tendency of the banquet has been to become every year less heavy and more tasteful. Turtle, of course, thick and clear, holds its own, and cold roast beef is always to the fore ; but the side-dishes, the game and poultry, the pastry and confectionery have lost that indigestible solidity by which at city banquets they were formerly distinguished. Much less port and sherry and milk punch, again, is drunk at up-to-date civic feasts than was formerly the case ; and the champagne has grown less sweet and less strong than of yore.

Moreover, there are at present at Guildhall at the close of a 9th of November banquet, dark and distant rumours of tobacco. Somebody, about the time when tea and coffee are being served, seems to be indulging in some remote corner in a cigar or a cigarette ; and, at all events, the thin end of the wedge of nicotine so strongly denounced a year or two ago by Dr. Benjamin Ward Richardson is being furtively introduced into city manners. In many particulars, the pageant which is visible on an up-to-date 9th of November is funda-

mentally identical with the pictures of the show which we see in old engravings — notably in Hogarth's dramatic tableaux of the career of the Industrious and the Idle Apprentice.

Gog and Magog no longer figure, it is true, in the show, their last appearance in the streets having been in 1837, in the mayoralty of Alderman Lucas, in whose pageant were exhibited two wicker-work copies of the Guildhall giants, 14 feet high; their faces being on a level with the first-floor windows of Cheapside. The men in armour, too, whose martial panoply used to be borrowed from the Horse Armoury of the Tower, and who occasionally imbibed such deep potations of strong beer as to reel in their saddles in a very unknightly manner, are rarely seen in a modern show; and gone, too, are the old allegorical groups representing all kinds of human attributes. Banners, however, of every conceivable colour, and blazoned with almost every conceivable variety of heraldic cognisances, are as plentiful in the days of Queen Victoria as they were in those of Queen Bess.

Preceding and following the great gilded ark with the six much-bedizened steeds and the Sword-Bearer, looking craftily out of the window as though he were in search of somebody whose head he might cut off, are half a dozen military bands, a volunteer corps or two, some lads from a training ship, perhaps a contingent of a Fire Brigade, and any number of vehicles, sometimes hired from livery stables, but dubbed for the nonce "State chariots," in which ride the Masters of the City

Companies. These, with a glittering cavalry escort, form the most conspicuous features of a Lord Mayor's Show up to Date. It blocks up the arterial thoroughfares for many hours of the day, and leads to a good deal of horseplay and picking of pockets; still, no Englishman who is proud of his country and of its ancient institutions would like to see the Show shorn of anything of its splendour; but I repeat that the 9th of November is not the period of the year when the pageant should sweep through London streets. We want a Lord Mayor's Show without a fog and with plenty of sunshine; and it would be much wiser to make midsummer the season for installing the Chief Magistrate in all his glory.

TEN-THIRTY A.M. AT THE NEW
LAW COURTS

PART I

“G. 5. In the High Court of Justice, Queen’s Bench Division, 1892 E. No. 1014. Between Pogis Underpump, plaintiff, and Gotopi and Co., defendants.

“Victoria, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith, to Wearied Wobbler, Paperstainer. Greeting. We command you to attend at the Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London, at the sittings of the Queen’s Bench Division of our High Court of Justice to be holden on Tuesday, the —— day of ——, 1892, at the hour of 10.30 in the forenoon, and so from day to day during the said sittings, until the above cause is tried, to give evidence on behalf of the plaintiff. Witness, Glaucus Owlett, Baron Ivybush, Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain, the —— day of —— in the year of Our Lord, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Ninety-Two.”

This is the engaging document which, about three weeks ago, just as you had finished your breakfast, was

handed to you by an attorney's clerk, with a complexion like a suet pudding, enlivened here and there by currants in the shape of pimples of a pale mauve hue; and thatched with a shock of red hair. So far as you could gather from the statements of your domestics, this unwelcome bearer of a writ of subpœna obtained admission to your residence on the plea that he had something to do with the gas, or that he wished to ascertain the net value of a first edition of *Cocker's Arithmetic*. At all events, he did get in somehow—attorneys' clerks would bore their way into a *lignum vitæ* chest with four locks and two iron bands round it—and after cheerily remarking that it was a fine morning (it happened to be pouring cats and dogs), he served you with the subpœna, tendered you half-a-crown in payment of your travelling expenses to the Royal Law Courts in the Strand, and took a somewhat precipitate departure; quite indifferent to your wrathful, "I ought to have had a guinea instead of two-and-sixpence for my expenses," and your indignant declaration that you were a hostile witness and would probably do the plaintiff more harm than good if you were called. As the clerk scuttled downstairs, you shouted over the banisters that you wouldn't come at all; whereupon he looked up with a fiendish grin on the suet-pudding face, and said, "YOU MUST." Having discharged this Parthian dart, he vanished into the infinities.

After the departure of this limb of the law, you took up the abhorred subpœna, stuck it in the pier-glass, and shook your fist at it. Then you felt very much as Job

expressed himself as having felt with reference to his birthday. You had formed such nice little plans for a day out of town on the very date fixed for your enforced attendance at the Halls of Themis! Wither the Halls of Themis! You were going to Brighton, to Tunbridge Wells, to Newmarket, to the Crystal Palace; but now all your plans are dashed to atoms by this implacable piece of paper. It was but a sorry consolation to sneer at the immense amount of tautology in the summons. Truly it was most gracious and condescending on the part of Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland to send you her greeting, and in the first person plural too; and to a modified extent you feel flattered that the Lord High Chancellor, whose acquaintance you once made at a public dinner, and who cut you dead the next day in Pall Mall, should testify to the genuineness of the Royal invitation.

On the whole, however, you are more strongly inclined to agree with Prince Bismarck, who, at Versailles, in 1870, talking to Dr. Moritz Busch on the inordinate prolixity of English legal processes, remarked, "What is the use of all this diffuse talk about Victoria, by the Grace of God, Queen, Defender of the Faith, sending Greeting in a writ of summons to somebody whom Her Majesty does not know from Adam? Would it not be more practical and easy to say, 'Look here, you scoundrel, you come to the New Law Courts, Queen's Bench Division, on such or such a day, and don't tell any lies, or it will be the worse for you'?"

There is plainly no armour against fate, as the

Elizabethan poet so pregnantly reminded us. You know that you will lose time, money, and patience by appearing as a witness in the case of Underpump *versus* Gotopi ; but you have been served with the subpoena, and you must needs obey it. So you resign yourself to your unhappy lot ; and on the appointed Tuesday dispatch a hasty breakfast, and, after your ill-digested meal, hail the shabbiest of four-wheeled cabs, and, feeling more than ever like the patriarch Job on his birthday, make the best of your way to the Royal Courts of Justice.

It is one of those charming London November mornings, when there is taking place a kind of triangular duel between the rain, the fog, and the smoke, all fiercely battling for the mastery. The result of their contest is an unanimous agreement on the part of all three to half drench you with drizzling raindrops, largely mingled with soot, and half choke and half blind you with the carburetted hydrogen of coal smoke combined with the native odour, so it would seem, of the Essex marshes, which exhilarating perfume in the shape of fog has come to spend a merry forenoon in town.

When the poet Coleridge visited Cologne he professed to have discovered no less than seventy distinct stench in that venerable cathedral city. There are many more on a damp and foggy day in London ; still, this much justice must be done to the new Law Courts, in the admission that in winter time they have one grand and peculiar miasma of their own—a more

powerful and more nauseous emanation even than that of Great Grubby Street Police Court. It is an amalgamated effluvium, a reek of stuff gowns, dog-eared papers, mouldy parchment, horse-hair wigs, imperfectly washed spectators, police constables and witnesses, with a bracing whiff of ammonia from the wood pavement in the Strand outside, to which, on days when a sensational trial is in progress, must be added the Araby the Blest gusts from the scent-bottles and the perfumed handkerchiefs of the gaily-dressed ladies who have flocked to listen, with the greediest of ears, to the scandalous details of a crapulent case, just as they would flock to an *opéra-bouffe* theatre to witness some mongrel, topical, and choregraphic entertainment, full of slang dialogue, and fishfag "breakdowns" and "cellarflaps."

You have not the slightest idea as to the whereabouts of the particular Court of the Queen's Bench Division where the case of Underpump *versus* Gotopi is to be heard. At the central entrance gate, towards which crowds of lawyers' clerks, with stuff bags under their arms, are flocking, you think that you might as well ask a policeman, and you address yourself to a very bluff, stalwart, morose-looking constable, who to all appearance has had something for breakfast which did not agree with him. At all events, he meets your deferential query with a "dunno," and looks as if he had a good mind to run you in forthwith for your impertinence. So you venture timidly up some stone steps and find yourself in a stone hall immensely long,


immensely high, and ridiculously narrow in its proportions. It is very dark to boot, and about as unimposing an apartment for a Great Hall of Pleas as can readily be imagined.

There are a great many arches supported on massive pillars in this hall; and, on the whole, it strikes you that an unnecessary number of thousands of pounds sterling have been lavished on the construction of a gigantic vestibule into which the public have been distinctly warned that they have no right of entrance unless they are personally concerned in some matter which is before the Court. However, as you are a witness in *Underpump versus Gotopi*, you feel that, on this day at least, you have a warrant for ingress to the atrium of the Temple of Justice. To your left as you enter, there is a kind of darksome bower in which an attendant is sitting in a grove of overcoats and umbrellas, all emitting the approved London Particular Law Courts Smell.

The attendant is very civil. The Queen's Bench Division Courts, he tells you, are upstairs; but in what particular tribunal the case in which you are legally compelled to be interested is to be tried, he knows not. You had better look at the "cause list." It is stuck up, the civil attendant adds, between two of the arches. "Where?" "There;" and he points in the direction of Hampstead Heath; that is to say, he might as well have extended his dexter digits towards that healthy acclivity; since, to the north, right in front of you, you can discern little beyond fog and smoke.

At length you are rescued from a deplorable state of uncertainty by a friendly barrister. You had become aware of him just before you entered the Court as, with the hem of his check trousers prudently turned up, he was cautiously picking his way across the muddy Strand. You cannot exactly make up your mind as to whether he is a young, or a middle-aged, or an elderly counsel learned in the law, because he is lean, and gaunt, and wan, and the rust and rime of the Law Courts are upon him; and he is wrinkled and furrowed, and has altogether "a stale and accustomed look." His wig has been put on awry, and it is off-coloured and seems mildewed. Even half an ounce of flour would brighten it up a little. His whiskers, which are sparse and straggling, are as mouldy-looking as his peruke. His forensic gown is frayed and threadbare; he has no bag—that has been borne into Court, you suppose, by his clerk—but he has a bundle of papers in his hand, tied up with green ferret.

The papers are dog-eared and yellow with age. What are they, you wonder? Have they any connection with the *Qui Tam* actions of yore, or the Thellusson Will litigation, or the Tichborne case, or the great suit between Stradling and Styles touching the pied horses and the horses that were pied? In any case, fortunately for you, the lean and hungry-looking barrister of uncertain age turns out to be a most obliging gentleman. The Queen's Bench Division, he says, is upstairs—everything at the New Law Courts seems to be upstairs—and Underpump *versus* Gotopi will be heard in Court



Number Nine. He happens to be going thither himself, and will be very happy to be your guide. The case, he incidentally adds, promises to be a "nutty" one. Then, as, with childlike confidence, you follow the seedy barrister upstairs, you begin to bestow a thought on the case itself.

You did not know the plaintiff—who is a distinguished philologist—until about a month ago, when he called on you and expressed a lively wish that you would testify as to what you knew about the custom among dictionary-makers as to the admission to or exclusion from dictionaries of certain words or phrases of Sanskrit, or Greek, Urdu Pali, or Slavonic or pure Whitechapel and Bethnal Green derivation. Mr. Underpump was the compiler of a new dictionary of the English language; and Messrs. Gotopi are well-known printers in a large way, carrying on business in Inkdabber Lane, Steampress Street, E.C., who contracted to print the new dictionary in question. It happened, however, that they objected to certain words and phrases in the manuscript supplied by the compiler, on the ground that if they printed them, they might expose themselves to the wrath of Mrs. Grundy, and might possibly be the means of raising a blush to the cheek of the Young Person. Very reluctantly you consented to attend and give evidence as to what you thought was advisable to admit and what to banish from a work which, after all, was to be issued at so high a price as to render its perusal by Mrs. Grundy or the Young Person a matter of extreme unlikelihood; still,

you were slightly reassured when you gave the required consent to find that several eminent English word-masters had also promised to be in attendance at the Law Courts and give their evidence on this matter of literary etiquette and ethics.

Your conductor pilots you up a narrow and gloomy staircase and into a corridor narrower and gloomier still. First turning to the right; second turning to the left. Then you encounter a great rush of lawyers' clerks and people of indescribable mien who apparently have some business in this most unlovely place. Then your cicerone halts at a door guarded by a police constable; he introduces you into Court Number Nine, and giving you a friendly nod, departs. In what case or cases, you wonder, is he retained, this lean and hungry practitioner: if any practice he have?

It is yet early, and the body of the Court itself is nearly empty, although the exiguous gallery, reserved for the public who have entered by a side door in the Strand, is already full. Perhaps, they have heard, by means of some occult subterranean wire, that Under-pump *versus* Gotopi is going to be a "nutty" case. You make your way into what is called the "well" of the Court, that is to say, the not very wide space on the floor between the last row of seats appropriated to Counsel and the Bench itself. You take your seat behind a long table already piled by assiduous clerks with papers tied up with red tape or with the green ferret aforesaid, and from this coign of vantage take a survey of the scene around you—not without a feeling

of nervous apprehension lest an usher should sternly inform you that you have no right to be in that part of the Court at all, and that you must go somewhere else. Whither? That is uncertain. There is nothing whatever certain about the Law of England save that, whether you are the plaintiff or the defendant in a suit, you will undergo much trouble and more misery, and have some portion, at least, of your skin taken off you, in the way of duly taxed costs.

The spectacle which you behold is scarcely an imposing one; indeed, if you have lately visited Brussels, and witnessed a trial in one of the spacious, handsome, and commodious apartments in the new Palais de Justice there, you might opine that Court Number Nine or court number anything in the late Mr. Street's Brobdingnagian pile, on which something like a million sterling has been spent, is only one of a series of ugly, mean, and shabby rooms, quite unsuitable for the dispensation of justice, to say nothing of dignity, in the capital of the greatest empire in the world. It is ill-lit, ill-ventilated, and full of the old London Particular Law Court odour, which will grow stronger and stronger as the Bar, the attorneys with their clerks, the jury, and the witnesses troop in. At present, beyond a few barristers in the extreme back benches, and the clerks fitfully gliding to and fro, there are very few people to meet your gaze. But as the minute hand of the clock creeps slowly but surely towards 10.30, the court grows fuller and fuller.

There is a little pen with appliances for writing in

which a group of two or three, swelling imperceptibly to double that number of gentlemen, are gathered and begin to refer to their note-books. These persons you instinctively recognise as representatives of the press. Turning round, and looking at the barristers' seats, rising amphitheatrical till the rearmost are lost in the misty distance, you find that counsel learned in the law have begun to muster with some strength; and presently you recognise more than one eminent Q.C. and several rising stuff-gownsmen of your acquaintance.

It is Mr. Justice Braddlestroggs who is to try the case. A learned judge—black letter scholar so they say, an adept in Norman French, an experienced, impartial, clear-sighted, high-minded, and altogether exemplary luminary of the law. You must not be led away to adopt an erroneous inference by the trifling circumstance that Mr. Justice Braddlestroggs is to all appearance fast asleep during a greater part of the cases heard before him. Yet, somehow or other he contrives to follow every sentence in the addresses of counsel for the plaintiff and the defendant, and every jot and tittle in the examination and cross-examination of the witnesses. It is only Mr. Justice Braddlestroggs' way to close his eyes and to appear to be wrapped in the arms of Morpheus. When the time for summing up arrives, it turns out that he has made careful notes of the entire body of evidence, and he proceeds to astonish the jury by the exhaustiveness of his knowledge of the suit and the lucidity and cogency of his comments thereon.

His lordship is the most punctual of judges, and at

the stroke of 10.30 he has emerged from a little door as though he were one of the automata which flank—or used to flank—the dial of the great Strasburg clock, has bowed with somewhat an air of cast-iron courtesy to the Bar and the spectators generally, and has taken his seat on the Bench.

TEN-THIRTY A.M. AT THE NEW LAW COURTS

PART II

ON the morning of the trial at the Guildhall of the memorable breach of promise case of Bardell *versus* Pickwick, Mr. Snodgrass wondered what the foreman of the jury, whoever he would be, had got for breakfast. To which made answer sharp little Mr. Perker, plaintiff's solicitor, "Ah, I hope he has got a good one." "Why so?" inquired Mr. Pickwick. "Highly important, very important, my dear sir," replied Perker; "a good, contented, well-breakfasted juryman is a capital thing to get hold of. Discontented or hungry jurymen, my dear sir, always find for the plaintiff."

You can scarcely help recalling the sagacious remarks of Mr. Perker as you watch the jury—it is a special one—coming tumbling into the dock and going through, in the usual uncouth and ungainly fashion, the process of being sworn. I don't know how it is, but I never witnessed a trial yet, either in London or in the provinces, where the jurymen did not appear to be tumbling upstairs into their box, and, subsequently, tumbling down-

stairs out of it. Jurymen's boots seem to me to make a peculiar creaking sound, and to have their own characteristic reverberations on the floor of a Court of Law.

As you do not care one cowrie whether the case of Underpump *versus* Gotopi and Co. is decided in favour of the plaintiff or the defendants, and your sole solicitude is to ascertain when you will be released from the thralldom under which you are at present mentally groaning, it matters little to you whether the jury this particular morning have had a good breakfast or a bad one. Still you find yourself scanning the twelve honest men rather narrowly, and asking yourself how many of them may be to any extent conversant with the elements of philology, or are competent to understand the curious ethical questions which are intertwined with the literary bearings of the dispute between the lexicographer and his printers.

In a minute or so, the swearing-in having been completed, the jurymen have settled down in their places, looking, on the whole, as if they knew that they were about to be profoundly bored. I was never myself on a jury but once in my life. It was a Middlesex jury, sworn to try criminal causes at Hicks's Hall. My fellow-jurymen were kind enough to elect me as their foreman, and I expected to have to pass at least five days of wearisome woe in the unsavoury precincts of Clerkenwell Green. As it was, being naturally—I hope—of a merciful temperament, I did my best to persuade my colleagues to acquit all the prisoners; and on the second day of the Sessions, the learned Assistant-Judge—bless him!—

finding perhaps that the course of justice was getting somewhat impeded through the compassionate character of the verdicts, sent me about my business. I hope that the next foreman did not find everybody guilty.

If, as all cheerful people should be, you are an attentive student of your *Pickwick*, you will, I feel almost certain, be disposed to agree with me that, although English jurisprudence has been to a very great extent reformed or modified since the period when the action in which Mrs. Bardell was plaintiff and Mr. Pickwick defendant was tried, very few changes have taken place in the aspect or even in the personality of an English civil tribunal. *Bardell versus Pickwick* came for hearing, I should say, about the time when I was born, that is to say, sixty-five years ago, and although that admirable caricaturist "Phiz," in his etching depicting the court, has arrayed his characters in the costume of 1836, it will be a matter of no difficulty to you now to pick out from the rows of seats apportioned to Queen's Counsel and from the upper benches tenanted by the gentlemen in stuff gowns, Mr. Serjeant Buzfuz and Mr. Serjeant Snubbin, with their juniors, Mr. Skimpin and Mr. Phunky. ,

To be sure, old Serjeants' Inn has been disestablished and demolished, and the legal title of Serjeant is almost, if not altogether, extinct; still the mantles of Buzfuz and Snubbin have descended on shoulders well worthy to support those revered togas. Mr. Pickwick, although he no longer wears shorts and black gaiters, yet sits occasionally on the low bench just beneath the desks

of the Queen's Counsel, which is constructed for the convenience of attorneys who from that spot can whisper into the ear of the leading counsel in the case any instructions that may be necessary during the progress of the trial. "The occupants of these seats," the illustrious historian of the Pickwick Club tells us, "are invisible to the great body of spectators, inasmuch as they sit on a much lower level than either the barristers or audience, whose seats are raised above the floor. Of course, they have their backs to both, and their faces towards the judge." Such was the "well" of the Court when Dickens wrote his first and most famous novel, and such is it at present.

The witness-box still looks like a kind of pulpit with a brass rail, and in the background, high up towards the gallery, there is the same numerous muster of gentlemen in wigs and gowns, "who present as a body all that pleasing and extensive variety of nose and whisker" for which the Bar of England was so justly celebrated in 1828, and for which it is still as justly renowned. Stay ; one little sumptuary alteration has in the course of a couple of generations been made in the appearance of the Bar. Moustaches are pretty plentiful, and even beards make a far from infrequent appearance among the Counsel ; while, in the "well," although you feel confident that the sharp-looking little man with the closely-cropped black hair is Mr. Perker, that the stout heavy man is Mr. Dodson, and the lean and hatchet-faced individual is Mr. Fogg, attorneys and solicitors in 1894 no longer think it necessary to


appear in public in sable garments. A lawyer nowadays may wear any costume that he pleases; whereas, even as recently as the period when Dickens wrote *Bleak House* he described Mr. Tulkinghorn as being attired entirely in black, with knee-breeches tied up with ribbons, and black stockings. Nowadays the gentlemen who are kind enough to serve us with writs, or to serve others at our request with these documents, to retain counsel for us, and, even if we win our case, may confidently be reckoned upon to favour us with sweet little bills of costs "as between solicitor and client," may wear without reproach any costume they choose. Dodson may appear in a suit of dittoes, and Fogg in a Newmarket cut coat and Oxford grey continuations; while nobody would quarrel with Mr. Perker if he donned a plaid ulster.

The weather being desperately cold this morning, you descry more than one prosperous solicitor whose greatcoat is trimmed with expensive astrakan; and lo and behold, not far from you is Mr. Eugenius Snapdragon of the world-famed firm of Snapdragon and Snapdragon, Jeroboam Place, Holborn, whose picturesque countenance and silvery locks might entitle him to sit as a model for a Venetian senator in a picture by Sir John Gilbert, and who wears above his elegant morning dress a huge pelisse frogged and braided and lined with the costliest Russian sable, with cuffs as deep, so to speak, as a draw-well, and a collar as high as one of the round tires of those Hebrew belles with whose extravagant toilette the prophet Isaiah was so terribly angry.

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As for the lawyers, so with their clerks. Articled clerks and copying clerks flourish at present just as they did sixty-four years ago; only "the middle-aged copying clerk with a large family, who was always shabby and often drunk," is becoming a somewhat rare specimen of a limb of the law in this well-dressed age. Mr. Jackson and Mr. Lowton, Messrs. Dodson and Fogg and Mr. Perker's young men are quite as conspicuously to the fore this morning in the Strand as they were at Guildhall in 1828, but I scarcely think that they patronise the bar-parlour at the Magpie and Stump quite as habitually or quite as uproariously as they were wont to do when George the Fourth was king; and as you glance round the "well," you become aware of clerks, some of whom have a decidedly sporting and others as pronounced a military appearance. Nay, more than one positively pose as mashers.

And now the great case of Underpump *versus* Gotopi and Co. has been called on, is well under weigh, and Mr. Justice Braddlestroggs, wrapping his black robes round him and comfortably ensconced among his cushions, seems to be taking his first nap. Mr. Skimpin—the rose by any other name would smell as sweet—opens the case in a not very interesting succession of drawls, lisps, and sniffs, and then Mr. Serjeant Snubbin—I beg his pardon—Mr. Snorter, Q.C., proceeds to address the jury for the plaintiff. Listening to this most eloquent advocate, in whose nasal organ perhaps the sound of the loud bassoon is too frequently audible, you might yield to the pleasant conviction that if there existed on the



face of this earth an individual who was only a little lower than the angels, that person was Mr. Pogis Underpump, who, by the way, is also an LL.D. of the University of Wildcatsville, Iowa, U.S.A., and a D.C.L. of the University of Schaffskopfstein, Moravia. Somehow or another, Snorter, Q.C., contrives to mingle with the merely legal elements in his client's case the information, doubtless so highly pleasing to the jury, that Mr. Underpump is a devoted husband, the affectionate father of a large family of sons and daughters, whom he is training up in the principles of piety and virtue. The plaintiff's learning, Snorter, Q.C., continues, is prodigious ; and as for his lexicon, it might be read from cover to cover by a whole High School full of Young Persons, and all the sweet girl-graduates of Girton and Newnham to boot.

Then he puts the plaintiff into the box, and you are sorry to find that ere poor Mr. Underpump has been five minutes under examination, he offers every promise of making the saddest of messes of it before the trial comes to an end. He has a very low and foggy voice to begin with, and a deplorable habit of biting his nails when he is asked a question, and is generally so indistinct that Mr. Justice Braddlestroggs waking up, to all appearance, from his "beauty sleep," exclaims, "Speak up, sir!" in such a thunderous tone, that the unhappy plaintiff collapses for a moment over the brass rail of the witness-box, just as you have seen Mr. Shallalah do when Punch gives him an unusually sounding thwack with his baton. The poor man has really a plain tale

to tell, only he fails to tell it plainly; and even his friendly advocate is compelled now and again to snort at him half angrily and to entreat him not to wander from the point.

But fearfuller woes await him. Mr. O. Bullyrag, Q.C., who leads for the defendant, has been eyeing the plaintiff and licking his lips throughout the whole of his examination. Then comes the hideous agony of cross-examination. Mr. Serjeant Buzfuz—I mean Mr. Bullyrag, Q.C.—rends the unhappy plaintiff, figuratively speaking, limb from limb. He cuts him up into ten thousand pieces; he ties slow matches between the victim's fingers and sets them alight; he heats copper basins and claps them on the shuddering plaintiff's pate; he turns him inside out, and then suspending him by the hair of his head, tied to a rope which passes through a pulley in the ceiling of the court, he bumps Underpump up and down—always figuratively speaking—in an ebony arm-chair, the seat of which is cut into diamond-shaped facets, just as the sworn tormentors did to poor Beatrice Cenci.

At the expiration of about half-an-hour's torture, this wretchedest of Underpumps emerges from the witness-box, streaming with perspiration, staggering feebly, and groping in the air with his hands as though he had been dazed with some fierce light. So he has. Bullyrag, Q.C., has brought his biggest guns to bear upon him, and what with the fire and the smoke, and the smell of villainous saltpetre, the poor wretch is for the moment all but bereft of his senses. The jury look

upon him more scornfully than compassionately. While he was being examined by Snorter, Q.C., their countenances seemed to show that they considered the plaintiff to be an honest man, although a bit of a blunderer ; but when Bullyrag, Q.C., has done with him, and flung his remains into the well of the Court, to be picked up and put together again by his solicitor, the jury, to all seeming, have come to the conclusion that if there ever cumbered the earth a hardened miscreant deaf to every dictate of honour and morality—a despicable caitiff who would think nothing of committing the Whitechapel murders, libelling the Equator, and setting the Thames on fire—that wretch was Pogis Underpump. What on earth was his solicitor about when he failed to retain Bullyrag, Q.C., for the plaintiff ?

The plaintiff's case is, happily for him, not yet concluded. The evidence of experts has to be proffered, and it is your turn to be examined. You do not feel very nervous, for you have read the incriminated dictionary very carefully, and conscientiously think it to be a rather valuable addition than otherwise to English philology, although scarcely suitable for the tables of boudoirs or the desks of class-rooms patronised by the Young Person. You have been furbishing up in your memory a few Greek and Latin, Sanskrit and Slavonic derivations which you have judiciously selected from your commonplace books, and you flatter yourself that you will be able to make a somewhat favourable show in the witness-box. You know Snorter, Q.C., very well. He is a member of a club to which

you belong—the Cicero—a capital whist-player and an admirable judge of port wine. Moreover you are not at all afraid of Bullyrag, Q.C., convinced as you are that he is at best a noisy wind-bag and braggart with not much more courage when boldly confronted than wind-bags and braggarts are usually found to possess.

But a great surprise, and one of a most pleasurable nature, is in store for you. It is just half-past 11 as you step into the box and are sworn. Then you plant your hands firmly on your hips and prepare yourself to answer the questions which you know will be propounded to you by Snorter, Q.C. Suddenly Bullyrag uprises in his seat and puts it to the judge that you should not be heard at all simply because you happen to *be* an expert and to know something tangible about dictionaries and their contents. Mr. Justice Braddlestroggs takes the same view that is put forth by Bullyrag, Q.C. The question, remarks his lordship, now altogether wide awake, is not one for experts to decide. It must be left to the common sense of the jury, who are men of the world, fathers of families, ratepayers, shareholders in the Truly Respectable Housekeepers' Company Unlimited, and all that kind of thing. Finally, Mr. Justice Braddlestroggs, with whom you have a dim remembrance of having met when you were witness in some previous trial of some journalistic case, in the course of which his lordship expressed his opinion that writers in newspapers were about the most worthless of mankind inasmuch as they wrote their articles for the purpose of sordid gain, bids you depart.

Joy! joy! you are free; you can telegraph home that you will return to lunch. No, you think better of that; you will lunch at the Cicero Club. All memories of the case of Underpump *versus* Gotopi are forthwith erased from your mind, just as the writing of a school-boy is erased, by a wet sponge, from his slate. You do not care what becomes of Underpump, or what is to be the fate of Gotopi and Co.; whether the verdict goes for the plaintiff or for the defendants, or whether the jury, being unable to agree, are discharged without giving any verdict at all. You are as the onager—you may enjoy the desolate freedom of the wild ass—only, as you hurry down the dark stairs into the hall, you are lightly touched on one arm, and turning round you behold the lean and hungry-looking barrister with the frayed gown, the mildewed wig, and the pantaloons turned up at the heel. “Not such a ‘nutty’ case after all,” he remarks; “heard it all, so far as it has gone at least, from the top row, right-hand corner. Always sit there. Don’t know how the case will go. Bullyrag is at his best this morning, but you never know what may happen. Sorry you were not called. Bullyrag would have made you sit up. Good-morning. Don’t come here again.”

EIGHT A.M. TO EIGHT P.M.: A RAILWAY TERMINUS AND A RAILWAY BOOKSTALL

TAKE care of your pockets ; for light-fingered characters are to be found within the precincts of some of the grandest London railway stations. Take care of your toes ; for railway porters swiftly wheeling luggage-laden barrows are careering hither and thither wildly. Take care not to tuck your umbrella or your walking-stick under your arm in such a manner as to endanger the integrity of the eyes of the people pressing on behind you. Take care, in short, of a good many things, for you are at the terminus of the great Domdaniel and South Pole Railway Company, and there are many things to be seen and heard in the booking-office and the vestibule and the platform well worth the attention of the studious observer of humanity.

The great Domdaniel and South Pole Railway takes everybody everywhere at extremely moderate fares. Never mind whether this notable railway has its terminus north, east, south, or west, in the giant city ; enough to know that it is neither at London Bridge nor at Liverpool Street ; and that if you journeyed to Cannon Street, to Charing Cross, to Euston, to the

Waterloo Road, to St. Pancras, to King's Cross, or to Victoria, you would not be able to find a terminus resembling, in any important particular, the pile which I am now about imperfectly to limn.

There is a big yard in front of the not very commanding premises which form the façade of the station ; and this yard, for full sixteen hours out of the twenty-four, is thronged with heavily-laden omnibuses, hansoms, and four-wheelers, private carriages, carts, and vans, all coming from and going, seemingly, in opposite directions, and productive of a distressing amount of noise, confusion, and unreportable language.

One should be tolerant, however, of these trifling drawbacks if one is old enough to remember the starting of one of the old-mail coaches say, from the Bull-and-Mouth, or the Green-Man-and-Still, or the Saracen's Head, or the Bolt-in-Tun. There was no crowding, no confusion, and no noise in those patriarchal days. Four inside, eight outside, and a moderate amount of luggage in the basket. The heavier baggage went down to its destination by wagon.

The coaches which conveyed His Majesty's mails and the very small proportion of His Majesty's subjects who ever thought of travelling more than fifty miles inland from the Metropolis were very quiet and subdued equipages in comparison with the mighty trains which, attached to armour-plated engines, at present bring to and take out of London every day and night thousands upon thousands of men, women, and children, bound for every nook and corner of the three kingdoms.

Compare the tranquil and, perhaps, slightly sleepy coaching system of the past with the continually shifting scenes which present themselves to your view at the terminus of the great Domdaniel line. Upon my word, while you are searching for the sum necessary to pay your second-class fare, say, to Bathsheba Junction, or East Balclutha, or Belgravia-on-Sea, or, for the matter of that, to Buda-Pesth, or Nishni-Novgorod, or Jeddo in Japan, there comes streaming through the ticket-office a pack of foxhounds!—pretty, pied creatures which, I know not why, in flesh and blood always look much smaller than they do when they make their appearance in pictures of the hunting field. Here, however, they all are, yapping and occasionally snarling, but always keeping the most observant eyes on the badge of office—and of correction too—borne by the whipper-in, a cleanly-shaven fellow with a tanned face and an unmistakably horsey look about the eyes and lips. How is it that close commerce with horses usually gives the people of the hunting-stable, the race-course, and the job-master's yard such an unmistakably equine mien?

Good old Lavater, the physiognomist, in his most diverting, but now almost forgotten, work, has engraved two portraits of a married couple who had lived so long together in peace and harmony, that they had grown, facially, to be wonderfully like one another. So may it be with horsey human beings. From their boyhood upwards they have dwelt among horses; their trade, their talk, their thoughts, their sympathies, have all clustered around the noble animal, and they have

become, after a manner, not only mentally, but physically, centaurs.

If you will be kind enough, having the necessary authority, to draw up in a line in the Mall of St. James's Park, say, a hundred individuals, impartially selected from divers sorts and conditions of men, and clad in suits of dittoes, I venture to think that I am physiognomist enough to be able to pick out from the array, so many coachmen, so many grooms, so many jockeys, so many stablemen, and so many hunters and whippers-in.

Whence the hounds have come and whither they are going, it is no business of mine to determine ; and there is no time to ask. Do we know at all where we are going to ? The mad fellow in Plutarch, when the night-watch stopped him and asked him whither he was proceeding, answered that he knew not ; whereupon, the wrathful captain of the watch had him arrested as a night prowler of bad character. "Was I not right?" quoth the simpleton, as they put the gyves upon him. "Did I know that I was going to gaol?" I suppose that the huntsman and his subordinate know whence these hounds came, and the place to which they are to be taken ; possibly they have come up from Leicestershire, and are going down into Sussex ; may be the whole pack were sold only yesterday at the Auction Mart, and it is not beyond the domain of likelihood that the tall, bluff, elderly gentleman with white moustaches and a plaid ulster, who is giving instructions to his groom, may be a master of foxhounds.

Perhaps it is just as likely that he is the owner of those three slender quadrupeds, all stockinged and hooded and swaddled up in warm coverings, which are being carefully conducted to a horse-box attached to one of the trains. Inside those woollen envelopes may be the famous "crack" Skiddamalink which won the Derby, but failed to carry off the St. Leger; while the other two animals may be respectively Dancing Barber, the American horse which did such wonders at Ascot last year, or Brother to Cauliflower, which you backed yourself only last week for a place in the race for the Kafoozlum Stakes. If you sought any information on these points you might very soon be able to obtain it from the crowds of booking men, racing touts, and welshers who hang about the station and the yard thereof, and who besiege the telegraph office with feverish dispatches, all of them horsey, and sometimes of a very shady nature, from misty morn till foggy eve.

Your attention, however, is speedily diverted by a little group of sable-clad nuns—some portly smiling old ladies, others wrinkled and parchment-faced parties, who look as though they slept on planks, wore undergarments plentifully besprinkled with cut-up hair-brushes, and supported nature chiefly on parsley roots, radishes, and charcoal biscuits. One or two of them, however, are really pretty rosy girls. Where are they going, you wonder? Perhaps to some dreary white-washed grated-windowed old convent in Belgium or the north of France. Perchance to some nice clean, cosy, cheerful ivy and flower-embowered nunnery in rural

England or at some English watering-place. Not improbably to India, or Australia, or China. Modern nuns are often Wandering Christians, and there is no rest for the soles of their feet.

Ah! here is a fresh arrival, and one of a most portentous kind. A party of at least twenty ladies and gentlemen and perhaps ten more individuals of both sexes more plainly clad, and in whose appearance a working-class expression is mingled with a somewhat artistic but Bohemian *allure*, hurry towards the barriers. They have a vast quantity of luggage with them; not merely trunks and portmanteaus and bags, but in addition huge packing-cases and mysterious bundles securely covered with canvas. What can these cases and canvases contain; and who are the ladies and gentlemen and the presumable working men and women, with somewhat of an artistic Bohemian look? To all appearance, they trouble themselves with very little either about their luggage or their tickets; the fact being that all these details are being very carefully looked after by a middle-aged gentleman attired in the height of fashion, with perhaps a few more diamond rings on his fingers and a larger diamond pin in his tie and a heavier gold watch-chain at his vest than you ordinarily notice among members of the "Johnnie," the "Chappie," or the "masher" type.

You recognise him at once; he is Mr. Leopold Thespis Strollerby, an old acquaintance of yours. He was a walking gentleman once at the Royal Adversity Theatre, but failed to attain any great popularity on the

boards; then he tried old man, but was not very successful in that line of business; subsequently he went on the turf, then he started a dramatic, sporting, and society journal, and ultimately he became acting manager of travelling dramatic companies. Just now he is perambulating the three kingdoms in the interest of Signor Torquato Tasso, that well-known *impresario*, who was born, I think in the Judengrasse, at Frankfurt, and whose real name is, I fancy, a little less Tuscan and a little more Teutonic than Tasso. At all events, the Torquato Tasso Opera Troupe have been coining money in the provinces; and how could they fail to do so, seeing that their *répertoire* includes such deliriously fascinating productions as *The Queen of the Pumpkins*, *The Princess Chicaleaury*, *The Dwarf Bride*, and *The Oyster Girls of Trouville*.

Behold! there is the world-famous heroine of *The Oysters of Trouville* herself talking to Mr. Ferdinand Rumpelstiltsken, the *primo tenore* of the troupe. If you have not had the privilege to behold Miss Aglae Oglestalls of the Torquato Tasso Company in that ravishing *opéra-bouffe*, to hear her sing, and to see her dance, you are at least familiar with her cabinet photograph, in which she is represented in the sweetest short pink skirt with eighteen black flounces, and the loveliest black silk hose with embroidered insteps, that ever you fixed you enraptured eyes upon. The name of her diamonds is legion, and the number of her admirers is similarly incalculable. By her professional exertions, Miss Aglae Oglestalls must be realising an income of at

least five thousand a year; and, unless I am mistaken, not so many years ago little Tabitha Chump, familiarly known as "Tabby," was the comfort of the humble home of her maternal parent—an estimable monthly nurse in Bassinet Street, Hampstead Road—and the cynosure of the admiration of the small boys and girls of the neighbourhood, for whose delectation, having a natural turn for the lyric and choregraphic arts, she would, with the kerbstone for a platform, gratuitously sing "Down among the Coals" and "Tommy, make room for your Uncle," accompanying those ditties by the sauciest of breakdowns and the nimblest of Highland flings. As you look upon her and admire her now, you observe that she wears a sealskin mantle worth at least a hundred guineas, and that her little black poodle must be worth not less than twenty pounds.

You have just managed to miss the train by which you intended to proceed say, to Smokely-on-Sewer, or Gruntley - in - the - Trough, or Pottedshrimpley - super - Mare; and it will be a full half hour before another train to your proposed destination will start. You have thus plenty of time to loiter about the bookstall, which is perhaps one of the most wonderful of the many marvels of up-to-date railway life. Five-and-thirty years ago, when I was writing "Twice Round the Clock," in the *Welcome Guest*, there was, as I thought, an ample sufficiency of newspapers and monthly and weekly magazines and periodicals published in London, and vended at the railway stations; but at the present time the prodigious quantity of publications poured out

every day, week, month, and quarter from a never-resting press simply astounds, bewilders, and overwhelms me.

Why this tremendous accession to our stores of railway literature? There are two sufficing reasons, so it strikes me, in the colossal development of the reading public. Compulsory education is training the younger generation to read ten times more, a hundred times more perhaps, than their fathers did, but there is another and even a more powerful cause for this tremendous augmentation in the number of very cheap, and, on the whole, very amusing and harmless publications. In 1857, when that *Welcome Guest*, of which I just spoke, was enjoying a very fair, but not excessive, circulation, good old Charles Knight had not ceased to inveigh against what he justly termed the "Taxes on Knowledge." One of the most oppressive of those taxes was the paper duty, which was imposed late in the reign of William III., and produced latterly about one million four hundred thousand pounds annually.

For long years the party of progress agitated for the repeal of this most irritating and unjust impost. I remember, myself, having been a member of two deputations which went up to one Prime Minister and one Chancellor of the Exchequer in Downing Street, who both listened politely enough to our representations, and then assured us that there was not the slightest chance of the duty being repealed just then, and so affably bowed us out of the room. The ex-

asperating old tax was, however, abolished in 1861. The two penny daily newspapers which had been painfully struggling for existence while the duty still pressed on them, became almost at once mines of wealth to their proprietors. Most of the high-class dailies followed suit in diminishing their prices to a penny, and by their side grew up squadrons and platoons, battalions and whole armies, of penny periodicals of a literary and artistic, a scientific, a comic, and especially of a society and sporting character.

All this while, science had been at work to discover new materials from which paper itself could be made. Before the tax was abolished, these materials were almost exclusively linen, hempen or cotton rags, and the sweepings of cotton mills. Paper made from straw was to some extent used, but rags held the supremacy. Gradually ingenious persons arrived at the conclusion that very serviceable paper could be made from the inner bark of trees, nettle-stalks, hop-tops, the tendrils of the vine, esparto grass, wood, clover, and, in fact, any fibrous vegetable substance ; and there is a story told of a German professor who, sometime in the sixties, boasted that he would make very excellent printing paper from a dead donkey, if any one who had such an article to spare would favour him with it. The astounding multiplication of materials for paper making, and the cheapness with which it can now be produced, accounts in a very great measure for the enormous increase in the number of penny and halfpenny

periodicals, but as very much of the paper which we consume is imported from abroad, it is questionable whether the outbreak of a Continental war would not, by forcing the price of paper, lead to a collapse of very many of the periodicals which at present are so marvellously abundant on the bookstalls at all the stations of the great Domdaniel and South Pole line, and, indeed, at every terminus and every station in the labyrinthine network of railway England. The majority of these journals are of a highly amusing character, and some are distinctly philanthropic, seeing that their proprietors, out of their abounding love for their species, are very fond of instituting "Word Competitions," by means of which subscribers of a shilling apiece may, if they are fortunate enough to guess the missing word, win a substantial number of pounds sterling. A merry system. A fascinating system. Somewhat resembling the French *Pari Mutuel*, I take it. Not unlike the Australian "Totalisator," I imagine. Whether it be illegal, as coming within the provisions of the Lottery Acts, I do not know.¹

¹ This "merry system" has since been pronounced to be illegal.

THE THAMES EMBANKMENT—ALL HOURS

THE Christmas Number of *Punch* 1892 contains one of those happy cartoons combining the picturesque with the humorous, the stately with the comic, which noble old John Tenniel alone among British artists can draw. He conjures up a view of the Thames at Westminster, and shows us the broad bosom of the stream covered by a glorified water pageant, in which figures Mr. Punch as the Doge of the greatest of all Venices in the world — London — standing triumphant on the poop of the Metropolitan *Bucentaur*, a kind of apotheosised Lord Mayor, with his sword-bearer, his mace-bearer, the officers of his household, and other satellites around; while in his following come a mighty flotilla of barges and gondolas, crowded with splendidly-clad company. Silken banners wave, rich tissues of cloth of gold rustle, a glittering regimental band, under the leadership of Lieutenant Dan Godfrey, discourse stirring strains. Tritons and Nereids disport themselves in the foreground among the swans and the bulrushes; and old Father Thames is pictured as transported with delight when he finds his historic river once more pure and pellucid, good to drink, good to lave in, good

for the holding of such splendid aquatic processions as used to make our river grandiose and glittering to the view from the days of the Plantagenets to those of the last Stuarts.

John Tenniel's masterly picture has given pleasure, no doubt, to many thousands of readers, old and young. Yet are there passages in it which might arouse a sigh in the breast of the Elderly Cockney. Why cannot we have a river as fair as that which the artist has delineated; and why should it not be thronged with handsome barques, and barges, and wherries, as it was in the old times? Alas! the enormous development of the giant city since the beginning of the present century, and the introduction of steam navigation, have killed the picturesque on the river. The first penny steamer that plied between the Old Swan Stairs, London Bridge, and Chelsea, sounded the death-knell of the artistic Thames—in London, at least. I am just old enough to remember when the Chief Magistrate of the City, in his state barge, accompanied by the barges of the great City Companies, made their progress from London Bridge to Westminster on the morning of the 9th of November; and on one or two occasions, perhaps, William IV. was rowed citywards in that Royal galley which still exists, as well as the Royal watermen do, although the barge has long since been laid up in ordinary, and the scarlet-clad watermen only exercise their limited functions on the banks of Virginia Water.

From about 1840 to 1870, whenever it happened

that I was in England, I could attentively watch the river getting dirtier, and the buildings on its banks growing uglier, dingier, and squalider year after year; until at length the stream was little better than an open sewer, bordered by uninteresting brick tenements and warehouses, with a few notable exceptions here and there, such as the Houses of Parliament, Somerset House, and the Temple; but on the whole, the condition of the Thames and its shores, in the midst of the mightiest and the wealthiest capital in the world, had become a national scandal and a national reproach. It was reluctantly acknowledged on all sides that something had got to be done, not only for the sake of architectural handsomeness, but also to check the further pollution of a stream which had become so hideously muddy, and so offensive both to sight and smell, that there was a legend, actually believed in by numbers of otherwise intelligent people, that an oleaginous stuff known as "Thames butter" was manufactured out of the slime and ooze of the filthy river and vended as genuine butter.

The "something" that had to be done was to embank the Thames; and the scheme of an embankment having been fiercely debated in Parliament, and on more than one occasion all but defeated by the influence of narrow-minded vested interests, was at length sanctioned by both Houses, and in 1864 there was begun that splendid river terrace which you and I are now perambulating.

In contemplating the genesis of the Thames Embankment it is difficult to repress a bitter smile when it is

remembered that in all probability the shores of the Thames were solidly embanked more than two thousand years ago ; since, among experts, there is a general consensus of opinion that in ancient times the Thames was not a river, but an estuary, the shores of which were the hills of Camberwell and Sydenham to the south, and those of Highgate and Hampstead on the north ; and that what we call the Thames valley was a vast marsh, somewhat resembling the lagoons around Venice, and through which plain the river wound its silver-winding way. It was Sir Christopher Wren's opinion that wharves or quays were built on both sides of the channel, and this theory is very tenable when we consider that a large portion of what is commonly called London is lower in level than the high-water mark in the Thames—a topographical fact which accounts for the floods which so often in early spring work such tremendous havoc in riverain Lambeth and Battersea. Some antiquaries have endeavoured to show that the river wharves of the Thames were built by the native Britons long before the Roman invasion ; but it is likelier that the Romans only found earthworks on the shores of the Thames, and substituted strongly-built walls of brick for the primitive embankments.


At all events, for a good many centuries after the evacuation of Britain by the Romans, the Thames remained practically unembanked ; and merchants and others who wished to use the shores for commercial purposes had no scruples in destroying what remained of the old Roman river walls in order to construct

wharves for their own use. Then, again, many of the nobility in Plantagenet and Tudor times had their town mansions on the southern side of the Strand, with gardens stretching down to the river, and with stairs whence they could proceed to their barges. The circumstance that so many grand patrician houses existed on this foreshore from Essex Street right down to Hungerford was probably the reason why Sir Christopher Wren, after the Great Fire, only proposed that the "commodious quay" which he projected should extend from Blackfriars to the Tower. His friend and contemporary, Evelyn, propounded another ingenious plan of a terrace from the Tower past Blackfriars to the Temple; but there he stopped short, probably for the same reason that had made Sir Christopher desist from his attempt to continue the embankment towards Westminster. In both cases, however, vested interests were to the fore, and the plans for embanking the Thames had to be abandoned. Three or four times in the course of the eighteenth century fresh proposals were made to build continuous quays on both sides of the river, but they did not go beyond the making of a few speeches and the publication of a few pamphlets and maps.

During the reigns of the Fourth George and the Fourth William, and the early years of the rule of our own beloved Sovereign, the subject of embanking the river from London Bridge to Westminster was frequently mooted in and out of Parliament by Sir Frederick Trench. In 1840, the eminent engineer,

James Walker, prepared plans for an embankment for the Corporation of London, but the plans were "hung up," and nothing was done. The country had to wait for the last administration of Lord Palmerston for Parliamentary sanction to be given to the great scheme of embanking the river, carried out after six years' unceasing labour, under the supervision of Sir Joseph Bazalgette. And even then London had to accept an embankment in piecemeal. The "Victoria" extends from the northern end of Blackfriars Bridge to the foot of Westminster Bridge. The "Albert" stretches from the Lambeth end of Westminster Bridge to Vauxhall; while a third section extends from Millbank to Cadogan Pier, hard by Battersea Bridge.

This is why I have said that the Elderly Cockney may well sigh when he considers the Embankment in its present incomplete state. To make it accord with the grandeur of the Metropolis of the British Empire the entire river on both its shores should be embanked from Battersea to the Tower. Had we not been, as we usually are in matters of Metropolitan improvement, timid and half-hearted, and ready to truckle to those confounded "vested interests," the great work might have been accomplished years ago. As it is, we have to be thankful—if we are thankful at all—for the smallest of small mercies. I grant that the river terrace from the New Palace at Westminster is comely enough. It starts well from the vastly improved Bridge Street, Westminster, and so down to Northumberland Avenue, which is in every respect a noble thoroughfare ;




while the National Liberal Club and the contiguous edifices of flats are really architectural adornments of a formerly very dingy and shabby foreshore. One terrible disfigurement near here makes itself apparent in the new Scotland Yard, the edifice erected as the headquarters of the administration of the Metropolitan police being almost as ugly and lumbering-looking a building as is the façade of the Hotel Métropole at Brighton—which is saying a great deal. Then, again, although a railway station is in general not by any means a lovely object to contemplate, it cannot be denied that Charing Cross railway bridge, in its aspect of Titanic solidity and strength, is really a most imposing structure.

Of course, from the picturesque point of view, the light and aerial suspension bridge which formerly crossed the river from old Hungerford Market to Westminster, and which now spans the Avon at Clifton, was gracefuller than the great railway bridge over which thunder so many ponderous trains throughout the day and night. Hungerford Market, as I remember it, was a most amusing place. Unfortunately it was disastrously unsuccessful as a commercial speculation, and the owners of the land were only too glad to sell it to the South-Eastern Railway Company. The market was intended to be a West-End Billingsgate, and for some years was satisfactorily supplied with fish; still, for some unaccountable reason, while the vendors were many the customers were few. In its latter days a spasmodic attempt was made to revive the fortunes of

the market by building a music hall in the centre of the basement area; but the public at large seemed no more anxious to hear songs sung at Hungerford Hall than to buy fish at the shops which surrounded it.

Superstitious people might have whispered that the whole neighbourhood lay under a curse, and that the word Hungerford was synonymous with ill-luck, and had been so since, some time in the Middle Ages, a certain Dame Alice Hungerford was hanged at Tyburn for murdering her little son under circumstances of the most horrible barbarity; while the greatness of the Hungerford family finally ceased with one Sir Edward Hungerford, who, after squandering a princely fortune—it is said that he once gave three hundred pounds for a periwig—died a Poor Knight of Windsor in Queen Anne's reign, at the more than patriarchal age of 115. He can scarcely be deemed lucky to have lived so long in obscurity and poverty. As for his great town mansion in the Strand, we read in *Pepys'* how, on the night of 26th April, 1669, the carelessness of a servant maid sent to take off a candle from a bunch, which she did by burning it off and leaving the rest on fire, sufficed to destroy the entire pile which had been just newly furnished. The conflagration might have spread and developed into another Great Fire of London; but Charles II. came down from Whitehall with his Guards, and with the sagacity and presence of mind which he showed from time to time, he stopped the spread of the flames by ordering the houses on either side to be blown up with gunpowder.



We must be grateful, too, I suppose, for the pretty little bits of ornamental gardens which have been formed on the Embankment on the land reclaimed from the river. You do not see many nurse-maids there, nor many people with long hair reading books, and occasionally smiting their breasts, and generally supposed to be either poets or actors studying their parts ; and, in fact, with the exception of a few shabby folks who may be reckoned upon to haunt every open space in London, the ornamental gardens, nicely laid out as they are, would not appear to have obtained any very considerable popularity. The Savoy Hotel, on the other hand, is a distinct improvement in the general prospect of the river terrace. Of course, if your proclivities are of an antiquarian nature, you would prefer to see the grey old pile of the Savoy Palace as it existed in Plantagenet times ; but elderly people with whom I have conversed, and who remembered very well what remained of the Savoy in the days of their youth, have told me that it was a wretched old place, as ugly as sin, as tumble-down as Seven Dials, and noticeable only as comprising a very uncomfortable barrack for a detachment of the Foot Guards, and an exceptionally unsavoury prison for deserters. The new hotel, close to Mr. D'Oyly Carte's diverting theatre, has a light, cheerful, altogether Continental air about it, and it is precisely the Continental aspect which we want, and which is so sadly lacking, on the Victoria Embankment.


I grant frankly and unreservedly that, as a monument of engineering skill, the Embankment is almost

unrivalled. I own that the great stretch of roadway from Westminster to Blackfriars forms a splendid promenade. I am quite willing also to recognise the fact that the construction of this great quay has revealed much more of the architectural beauties of Waterloo Bridge than were formerly visible. I do not deny that Cleopatra's Needle is fully worth the sum which the munificent Sir Erasmus Wilson expended in bringing the gigantic monolith from Alexandria to London. I have not a word to say against Somerset House, save that the central dome is paltry and insignificant, and that the arched gates in the basement are mean and common-looking when compared with the architectural stateliness of the superstructure. Against the Temple Gardens and the grand old halls of the two honourable societies, not one word have I to say ; and Alderman de Keyser's Hotel very handsomely rounds off the northern corner of Bridge Street, Blackfriars, and most satisfactorily replaces the forbidding mass of bricks and mortar which formerly formed a screen to the abominable old prison of Bridewell.

More than a score of years ago there was a Gaiety burlesque in which Mr. J. L. Toole enacted the principal character, and in which he never failed to bring down the house in roars of laughter by an oft-repeated catch-word, "Still I am not happy." Up and down the Embankment do I trudge, or along the great roadway do I drive ; and still I am not happy. The view of the Houses of Parliament and of the venerable Abbey in the distance ; the four bridges of Westminster, Charing

Cross, Waterloo, and Blackfriars; the Duke of Buccleuch's palatial mansion, with its Mansard roof, the clubs and hotels and public schools which line some portion of the road; the old Adelphi Terrace, renovated and "spruced up," but always welcome to the sight; all these features do I duly appreciate, and sometimes I am sanguine enough to hope that I shall live to see the saplings with which the footpath has been planted grow into something like proper trees. My complaint is that we do not make enough of the Victoria Embankment. The Underground Railway runs beneath it from Blackfriars to Westminster; and that usefulest of lines has an adequate number of stations on the route.

These stations should make the Embankment lively; but, to my mind, they utterly fail to do so; and the crowds of passengers who are continually entering or emerging from the stations seem to bestow scarcely any attention on the great terrace over which so many hundreds of thousands of pounds were spent. I want to see cafés on the Victoria Embankment. I want to see beer-gardens, handsome and well-appointed, and where the people could enjoy the best of good instrumental music. And, finally, I want the entire river parapet from Westminster to Blackfriars to be lined with bookstalls precisely as the quays of Paris are so lined—bookstalls which should bring not only bookworms and collectors of "curios" to the Embankment, but studious boys and studious girls, the numbers of whom I am glad to believe are increasing by leaps and bounds



every year. I want to see more private carriages and more ladies on horseback on fine mornings and fine afternoons ; and when we have made up our minds to avail ourselves even of half the manifold advantages placed within our reach by Joseph Bazalgette's stupendous engineering achievement, I shall be really happy—so far as it is permitted to a mortal to be felicitous, here below.

CARTHAGE IN THE HAYMARKET

It is a fact worthy of remark, that London is a metropolis which, while it cheerfully acquiesces from century to century in the survival of slums, will very rarely be persuaded to tolerate the long-continued existence of ruins, or even of vacant spaces, within its confines. Ever since the days of James I., who vainly endeavoured by Royal proclamation to arrest the further growth of the capital, we have been possessed by a building mania, and one of the most difficult enterprises which modern philanthropists have entered upon has been to preserve a sufficient number of open areas in this overgrown Babylon, where the speculative builder is perpetually on the watch to swallow up every disposable spare yard of ground for brick-and-mortar purposes. Within my time Cremorne, Vauxhall, and the Surrey Zoological Gardens have all been built over, and a large portion of Hampstead Heath has been with difficulty rescued from the devouring maw of the building fiend.

A towering Memorial Hall covers the site of the old Fleet Prison, and were I to go over the water I should be puzzled to find out where the Queen's Bench, the Marshalsea, and Horsemonger Lane Gaol once stood.

The same uncertainty will, ere long, reign touching the precise locality of Coldbath Fields and Tothill Fields prisons. Picturesque, although dingy, old Oxford Market has given place to a pile of residential mansions; and as for the Smithfield which Charles Dickens described with such terrible force in *Oliver Twist*, what with dead-meat markets, poultry, fruit, and vegetable markets, it has been transformed utterly beyond the recognition of Cockney Rip Van Winkles.

Still, we are too active, too pushing to march in a hurry, and perhaps too greedy of gain to bear with ruins, or, for any lengthened period, with unoccupied spaces "eligible" for building purposes. It is true that we have no "classical" ruins, so to speak, in our midst. If we dismiss as apocryphal the legend that the White Tower in the Tower of London was built by Julius Cæsar, the oldest public edifice in London is obviously Westminster Abbey, and of Roman remains one of the very few that are extant within the Metropolitan area is the Roman bath in Strand Lane. Paris has two famous ruins, but with a great bridge of Time between them. One is the Thermes on the Boulevard St. Michel, the remains of the immense baths appertaining to an Imperial Roman palace, long inhabited, if not actually erected, by the Emperor Julian, the Apostate. Another most conspicuous ruin in the French capital is the charred and blackened shell of the Cour des Comptes, on the Quai d'Orsay. This most woeful of modern ruins was burned by the Communards in 1871.

And this brings me at once to the subject of this

chapter. For some months past there has been a ruin at the corner of the Haymarket, eastward of Waterloo Place. The dilapidated edifice occupied a vast space of ground, at the eastern side in the Haymarket, and extending north and south from Charles Street to Pall Mall. It used to be known as Her Majesty's Theatre, but I prefer to call it Carthage, for the reasons of the infinite wretchedness of its plight and of the famous memories which it recalls. With our usual impatience of ruins, however, on its being generally confessed that there was no chance of prosperity for Her Majesty's Theatre as a home of Italian Opera, or, indeed, as a place devoted to any other kind of entertainment, and the Crown lease having fallen in, the theatre was not allowed slowly to subside into ruins, but was deliberately and ferociously torn down, with the view of straightway erecting a structure of quite another character in its place.

It does not in the least matter to me whether the new edifice which is to arise on the area of the Haymarket Carthage is to be a Co-operative Store, or a branch of the General Post-Office, or a Brobdingnagian bucket shop, or another West-End branch of the Sempiternal Wild Cat Bank, Unlimited, or a gigantic hotel. I have heard that the last named is to be its destiny ; but I prefer to regard it only as a congener of the antique African city which was set on fire by the Romans, and burned incessantly during seventeen days ; which was partially rebuilt by Augustus, wrested from the Romans by Genseric and his Vandals, and at last

fell into the hands of the Saracens. Do you know Tasso's lines on the delended city? I will give them to you as beautifully rendered by Fairfax :

Great Carthage low in ashes cold doth lie,
Her ruins poor, the herbs in height can pass ;
So cities fall, so perish kingdoms high,
Their pride and pomp lie hid in sand and grass.

I repeated these lines to myself the last time when, coming from Pall Mall, I turned to behold the Opera Colonnade, the pillar smeared over with colours once garish, now dirty, and branded with the inscriptions of "Lot 54," "Lot 107," and so forth, and saw that the façade of the once splendid theatre had been wholly demolished, the auditorium entirely dismantled, the stage ripped up, and only something like the phantoms of the frame of the proscenium, and of the different tiers of boxes remaining in unsightly brickwork. Where were the yellow satin curtains ; where the huge central chandelier ; and where, oh ! where, the scenery and the costumes, the decorations, and, more than all, the wondrous harmonies, vocal and instrumental, that once made the Italian Opera House one of the chief glories of London ? All gone as thoroughly and as hopelessly as Dido's city, the building of which was painted with such wondrous exuberance of imagination by our Turner. Would that he were alive to paint Carthage in the Haymarket by moonlight, and Colonel Mapleson musing like Marius of old among its ruins !

With the operatic Punic ruin I was in my youth very much, although indirectly, concerned. So far as I

could gather from maternal information, my paternal grandfather, Claudius Sebastian Sala, a Roman citizen of ancient descent, came to this country in the year 1766 with a letter of recommendation to one Signor Gallini, a refugee domiciled in England—whose son became a celebrated dancing-master and giver of concerts and masquerades—who was at one time lessee of the King's Theatre, or Italian Opera-House, in the Haymarket, who afterwards married a daughter of Lord Abingdon, became Sir John Gallini, and gathered wealth enough to build the Hanover Square Rooms, now reconstructed as a club. I think that my grandfather had something to do with the direction of the ballet at the King's Theatre; and, indeed, the Terpsichorean art seems in the last century to have been extensively cultivated in one branch of our family, since, some years ago, on my friend, the late James Hannay—who was very much “gone” on genealogy—telling me he had discovered an ancestor of mine who was a Grand Inquisitor in Spain, I was compelled to inform him in reply that, whatever my presumed ancestor had had to do with the Holy Inquisition, I had had an ancestress whose vocation had been of a far cheerfuller, albeit humbler, nature, and that I possessed a letter, of which the ink had grown sadly faded, in her handwriting, and in which she had entreated her brother, my grandsire, not to let it be known that she had danced on the tight-rope at the Carnival of Venice, in 1780, seeing that the publication of that certainly not incriminating, but scarcely dignified, fact might militate against her con-

tracting a matrimonial alliance with a wealthy banker at Trieste. It chanced, likewise, that I once became aware of a Signora Catarina Sala who lived at Como, and kept a tripe-dresser's shop; but I consoled myself by remembering that she belonged to the Lombard, and not the Roman, branch of our house.

You may be sure that the apparitions of the old ballets at the King's Theatre rose up before me as I gazed on the skeleton proscenium, the dreary yawning gap which should have been the pit, and the naked arches which once supported the vanished tiers of boxes. I seemed to be listening to a phantom opera, say Vanneschi's *Fetonte*. Horace Walpole criticised that same opera in no amiable mood. Phaeton, he remarked, was run away with by horses that went at a foot pace like an Electress's coach, with such long traces that the postilion was in one street and the coachman in another. "Then came Jupiter with a farthing candle to light a squib and a half, and that was what they called fireworks." The old King's Theatre, where my grandfather possibly assisted Sir John Gallini in arranging the jigs and minuets in operas, subsequent to Vanneschi's *Fetonte*, was burned down in the year 1789.

An engraving is extant of the combusted opera-house. It shows the front of the edifice much as when it was built by Sir John Vanbrugh, in the reign of George I. The façade was only thirty-four feet wide, and the whole building, which was of red brick, somewhat resembles a Quakers' meeting-house. Over the entrance hall there is a large placard, announcing that "Ridant's Fencing

Academy," was held in an upper storey of the edifice; and on the piers below are large posters, announcing the appearance of Signor Rauzzina and of Signora Carnevale. It is to be hoped that these posters did not provoke the wrath of the more sentimental among Royal Academicians at the time as "a hideous disfigurement" of the beauty of the public buildings of London!

A very different opera-house was that erected in 1790 from the design of an architect of Polish extraction, named Novosielski; but the new theatre began its career over-weighted with those debts and liabilities which had been its bane ever since Congreve and Vanbrugh started an Italian Opera-House in 1704 with a capital of three thousand pounds, in shares of a hundred pounds from each held by thirty persons, who, in addition to their interest in the theatre, were to have an admission ticket for life to all public performances given in the house. As the King's Theatre began, so did Her Majesty's Theatre end. Under Mr. Mapleson's management the magnificent structure was gutted by a great conflagration in December 1867. The assignee of the property, the Earl of Dudley, decided upon rebuilding the theatre without loss of time; and in March 1869 the new house, which had cost some fifty thousand pounds, was ready for the public.

Everybody was anticipating the probable date of the opening of the new theatre, when there was fulminated in the *Times* a proclamation, from the directors of Her Majesty's Theatre, to the effect that no performances

would be given there during that season ; the solution of this enigmatical notice being that the construction of the interior had cost so large a sum that, the greater part of the boxes and stalls being held on lease, the expenses would necessarily be in excess of the receipts, even in the highly improbable case of a full attendance every night. Poor old theatre ! From first to last its progress financially was all downhill. The lessee to whom the ingenious device had occurred of selling the leases of boxes and stalls was a Mr. Benjamin Lumley, a highly respectable and accomplished gentleman, who had been the solicitor of M. Laporte, a French actor of some repute, and who succeeded at his (Laporte's) death to the managerial throne of Carthage in the Haymarket.

You may read in magazine articles and volumes of reminiscences that from the time of the Regency to that of the accession of Her Majesty, the history of the Opera-House in the Haymarket is that of a series of triumphs. Yes ; we all know that early in the century the incomparable *prima donna* Catalani sent London stark staring mad with her wonderful achievements as a vocalist, and that for the operatic season of 1809 she received the almost Patti-like remuneration of fifteen thousand pounds. Then came the triumphs of Pasta, and of Velluti, the wonderful male soprano of whom something was said in one of my papers on Regent Street. Then there was delightful Henrietta Sontag, and then succeeded the operatic stars of my own boyhood, Giulia Grisi, Rubini, Tamburini, Lablache, and later on, Mario. The magazine articles and the reminiscences do not tell

you, however, that the financial history of the theatre was one mainly of debt, difficulty, and ultimate ruin.

In 1837 the "King's Theatre" became "Her Majesty's Theatre" in honour of the accession to the throne of Queen Victoria, whom, in those days, we used to talk and sing about as "The Bonny English Rose." That M. Laporte, whom I mentioned just now, was "Doldrum, the Manager," immortalised in Tom Ingoldsby's ballad of "A Row in an Omnibus (Box)." A very silly intrigue among the operatic stars brought about a disturbance at the beginning of the season of 1841, almost equalling in turmoil the noisiest of the "O.P." riots. "Doldrum, the Manager," otherwise Laporte, had declined the further services of the great baritone, Tamburini, and had replaced him by a singer named Coletti; but Madame Giulia Grisi, whose beauty as well as whose talents had made her *par excellence* the artistic lioness of the day, was on the side of Tamburini, and at her bidding, or at least instigation, a tremendous demonstration against Coletti was organised among her aristocratic admirers. On the night of the first appearance of Coletti, the omnibus box on the pit tier—where is it now?—was crowded by the bucks and dandies of the day, yelling, shrieking, hooting, and calling for Tamburini and Laporte. The manager, foreseeing uproar, had discreetly caused the door of communication between the omnibus box and the stage to be locked. The patrician tenants of the box were additionally exasperated when they found that they were debarred from their usual privilege of lounging behind the scene and chatting

with the pets of the ballet between the acts; and the honour of having kicked through and eventually demolished the panels of the locked door was ascribed to a Prince of the Blood, now universally popular as an illustrious and gallant Duke. The stage at last was stormed by the patricians, and the performance came to an untimely close; but good-natured Count D'Orsay soon afterwards contrived to patch up a reconciliation between the dandies and "Doldrum, the Manager." Negotiations were entered into with Tamburini, and the ostracised baritone returned in triumph to Carthage in the Haymarket. Laporte resigned his sceptre in 1842, and when he died soon afterwards, Mr. Benjamin Lumley reigned in his place.

Of that able, but in the end not successful, *impresario*, whose name must always be associated with that of Jenny Lind, whom he first introduced to a London audience, I preserve a very pleasant memory. In the autumn of 1850 I was engaged, at the instance of my friend, Alexis Soyer, sometime *chef* at the Reform Club, to paint on the staircase walls of Gore House, Kensington—which he was fitting up as a great cosmopolitan restaurant, to be known as "Soyer's Symposium," in view of the forthcoming Exhibition of 1851—a comic panoramic procession of the leading celebrities of the day. The work was executed in oil and in monochrome, and I passed about eight hours a day for about three months, perched sometimes on a ladder, and sometimes on a plank suspended by cords from the ceiling, sketching in a mob of the then famous men and women of the

epoch, all with very large heads, and generally on the broad grin. That was thought to be humorous art in the year 1850. One day, coming down to lunch, with my brown holland overalls all grimed and spattered with oil and turpentine, Chinese white and Brunswick black, I found myself in presence of Soyer and a tall, dark gentleman of slightly Hebrew mien. This was Mr. Benjamin Lumley, lessee and manager of Her Majesty's Theatre. He had been watching me at work, and after a few pleasant words he left me. But the next day I received a note from Mr. Lumley's secretary, saying that he had placed my name on the free list for the pit of Her Majesty's Theatre for the entire season ; so you see that, although my career as an artist was not a very protracted one, it was not wholly without distinguished patronage. Perhaps it was for that reason that when I looked the other day on poor old Carthage in the Haymarket there trembled in my eye a "drop of unfamiliar brine."

THE END

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